13th Anniversary ALL STAR ISSUE

THE MAGAZINE OF Fantasy AND Science Fiction

OCTOBER 40¢

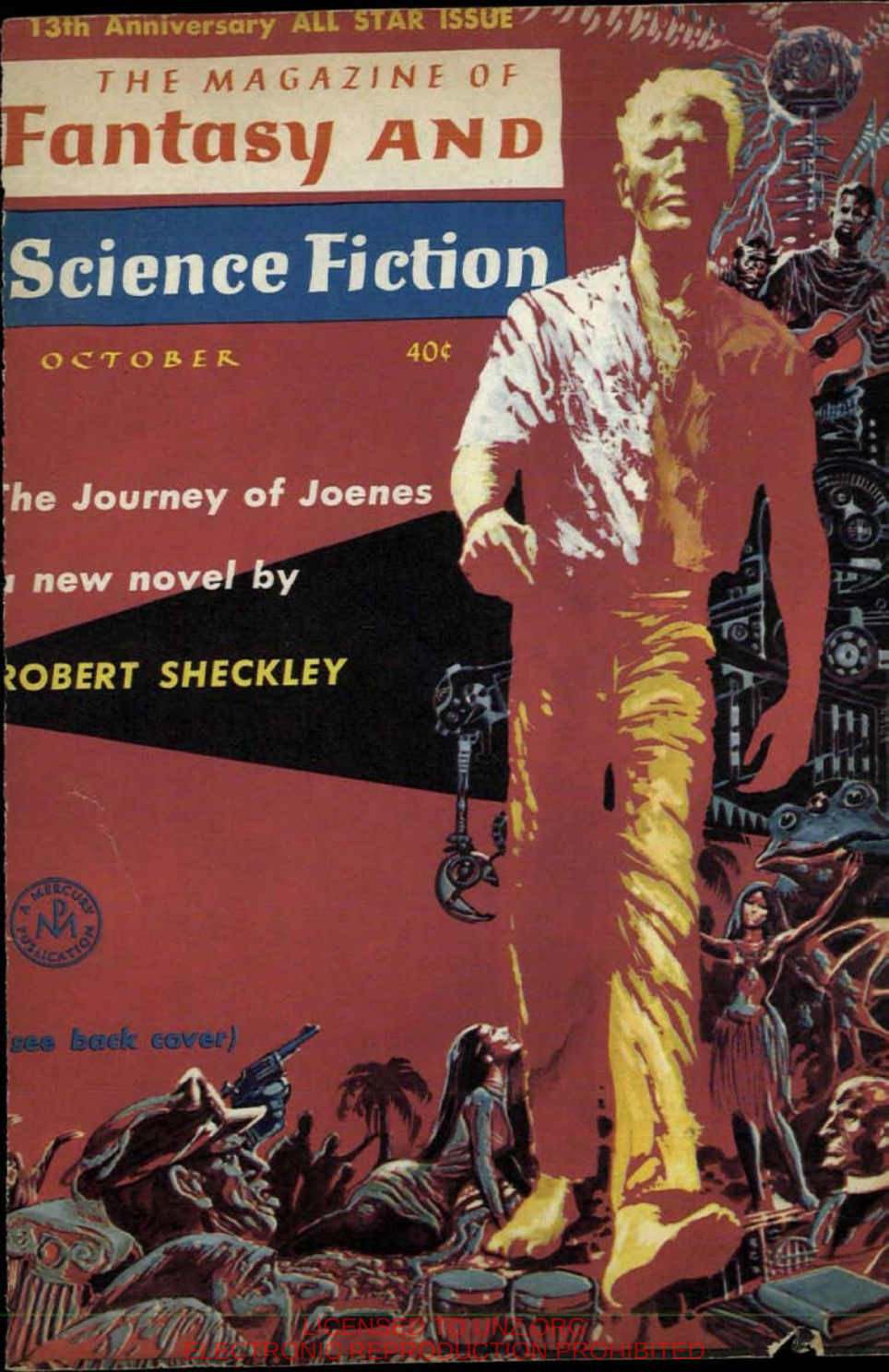
'he Journey of Joenes

new novel by

ROBERT SHECKLEY

A MERCURY PUBLICATION

see back cover)



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Fantasy and Science Fiction

OCTOBER *Including Venture Science Fiction*

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Joseph W. Ferman, PUBLISHER *Avram Davidson*, EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Robert P. Mills, CONSULTING EDITOR *Edward L. Ferman*, MANAGING EDITOR
Isaac Asimov, CONTRIBUTING SCIENCE EDITOR

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EDITORIAL

First of all, a dip into The Question Box. *Is Randall Garrett really Randall Jarrell?* No, he really isn't. He is incredible enough just being Randall Garrett. *Whatever happened to fantasy stories with the element of terror or horror in them?* An answer will be found on the front pages of your daily newspaper; in addition, we have excellent such stories coming up by Israel Zangwill, P. M. Hubbard, and Russell Kirk. *Were we serious is saying* (August issue) *that if we obtained a juvenile who reviewed books we would review at least one juvenile?* We were. *Will we consider applications from Macon, Georgia (age 16), and Georgian Bay, Ontario (age 14)?* We will. *Will we, since we mentioned Mr. Boucher's nice letters of rejection, consider a story once nicely rejected by Mr. Boucher?* Yes; and if we reject it, too, we will try to do so just as nicely. *Since the Pope has a legislature of 13, which is bad because only the number 1 is divisible into it, will we support a U.N. Resolution requiring every state to have a 1080 man legislature in 360 man weekly shifts for 5 days, Saturday, Sunday, and Reserve, in 3 split 8 hour, 120 man daily shifts, 60 on duty, 60 reserve?* We will not. We have enough troubles, and so has the U.N. For that matter, so has the Pope.

We attended the 15th Annual West Coast Science Fantasy Conference *(Wester-Con XV)* in Los Angeles, June 30-31, together with our lovely wife, Grania, and our unborn child; Jack Vance was Guest of Honor, Anthony Boucher was MC; they and Poul Anderson, Mark Clifton, Ray Bradbury, A. E. Van Vogt, and Robert Bloch, among the speakers, helped make the occasion a very pleasant one. It was the first time we met A. E. Van Vogt. All we could think of to say was, "Hi, there." Mr. Van Vogt, we are happy to report, said, "Hi." We intend, D.v., to have been at the World SF Convention in Chicago, Labor Day Weekend. Watch this space for further fascinating details of our insouciant hobnobbings and sophisticated conversations with The Great.

— Avram Davidson

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In this issue . . .

. . . The complaint, often made, and often justly, that many SF stories of the future deal with technological changes only, and present a social outlook essentially unaltered from the present one, is certainly not applicable to **BRIAN ALDISS'S** long story—the same whose ending, which gave us such surprised pleasure, we spoke of in an earlier editorial. **ROBERT F. YOUNG,** after an absence as long as it was undesired, returns with a wry tale of overpopulation and outer space; **VANCE AANDAHL** is present and paradoxical in a short satire mathematical (or something); on pages 39 to 51 **MILDRED CLINGERMAN** fans will find cause for rejoicing. **DR. ASIMOV** is here, of course, and red-hot; your editor rattles on about books (having been absent in this capacity from the previous issue); newcomer **DON WHITE** gives us a rococo glimpse into the lives of princesses; and **HYACINTHE HILL** provides poetic balance—always a good thing, we think. And of course the biggest item in this feast of fat things is Part One of **ROBERT SHECKLEY'S** two-part serial—wild, witty, and delightfully different.

Coming soon . . .

. . . is **R. BRETNOR,** of the memorable *The Gnurrs Come From The Voodvork Out,* with something which might have been entitled *The Man Who Loved Lions,* but isn't. Also a vivid, sad, and convincing story by **TERRY CARR**—in our opinion, his best yet. The ever-dependable **GORDON R. DICKSON** has a moral drama of regression and death; **JOHN BRUNNER** takes a grim look at telepathy through a telepath's "eyes"; **FRITZ LEIBER** looks at current events through an Old Norse glass—and grimaces. There are novels by **MACK REYNOLDS** and **SIR L. E. JONES** and articles by **FREDERIK POHL** and **L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP.** And, moreover, a first story by poet **KAREN ANDERSON,** a novelet by **RICHARD McKENNA** of *Casey Agonistes,* droll verse by **RANDALL GARRETT,** the first Japanese SF in The Magazine, and a rich—remarkable—relation by **P. M. HUBBARD,** who has been several times here reprinted from *Punch:* Warning: This one isn't funny.

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The kind of artistry found in this story by Brian W. Aldiss will surprise no one except those who are about to read him for the first time. This story of Derek Ende, his brave—or bootless—voyage to a future and hazardous Ultima Thule; his adventuring in the fleshpots, relations with his Lady, and that Lady's own singular (and deeply significant) experiments, is the work of: Item . . . *The Literary Editor of the* Oxford Mail, *an erudite daily whose book reviews are among the top in Britain.* Item . . . *The President of the British Science Fiction Association.* Item . . . *The editor of PENGUIN SCIENCE FICTION ONE (1961), an unprecedented success, and of PENGUIN SCIENCE FICTION TWO (forthcoming).* Item . . . *The author of THE PRIMAL URGE (Ballantine Books), "a novel somewhat too hot for British publishers to handle;" THE BRIGHTFOUNT DIARIES (bibliophilia); THE LONG AFTERNOON OF EARTH (Signet), based on his HOTHOUSE series—F&SF, (HOTHOUSE, Feb., 1961; NOMANSLAND, Apr., 1961; UNDERGROWTH, July, 1961; TIMBERLINE, Sept., 1961; and EVERGREEN, Dec., 1961); and his latest, A GARDEN WITH FIGURES, just completed, a plotless novel, which (says his British agent, whose name ought to be Ashenden, but is actually Carnell) "will give reviewers and psychiatrists food for discussion for years to come."* Item . . . *The star, in whole and in part, of two BBC TV shows.* Item . . . *The possessor of a great sense of humor, not evident in, because not appropriate to, the story below; but evident in one of our own most favorite stories, the one about hunting a brontosaurus, POOR LITTLE WARRIOR! (F&SF, April, 1958). Whenever, in the future, we think of this newest Brian Aldiss story, we shall think of a refrain from a hauntingly beautiful old Scots ballad—sung by the hauntingly beautiful voice of the beautiful and haunting Joan Baez . . . "I am a man upon the land/I am a silky in the sea . . ."*

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A KIND OF ARTISTRY

by Brian W. Aldiss

I

A GIANT RISING FROM THE fjord, from the grey arm of sea in the fjord, could have peered over the crown of its sheer cliffs and discovered Endehaaven there on the edge, sprawling at the very start of the island.

Derek Flamifew Ende saw much of his sprawl from his high window; indeed, a growing ill-ease, apprehensions of a quarrel, forced him to see everything with particular clarity, just as a landscape takes on an intense actinic visibility before a thunderstorm. Although he was warmseeing with his face, yet his eye vision wandered over the estate.

All was bleakly neat at Endehaaven—as I should know, for its neatness is my care. The gardens are made to support evergreens and shrubs that never flower; this is My Lady's whim, that likes a sobriety to match the furrowed brow of the coastline. The building, gaunt Endehaaven itself, is tall and lank and severe; earlier ages would have found its structure impossible: for its thousand built-in paragravity units ensure the support of masonry the mass of which is largely an illusion.

Between the building and the fjord, where the garden contrived itself into a parade, stood My Lady's laboratory, and My Lady's pets—and, indeed, My Lady herself at this time, her long hands busy with the minicoypu and the agoutinis. I stood with her, attending the animals' cages or passing her instruments or stirring the tanks, doing always what she asked. And the eyes of Derek Ende looked down on us; no, they looked down on her only.

Derek Flamifew Ende stood with his face over the receptor bowl, reading the message from Star One. It played lightly over his countenance and over the boscises of his forehead. Though he stared down across that achingly familiar stage of his life outside, he still warmsaw the communication clearly. When it was finished, he negated the receptor, pressed his face to it, and flexed his message back.

"I will do as you message, Star One. I will go at once to Festi XV in the Veil Nebula and enter liaison with the being you call the Cliff. If possible I will also obey your order to take some of its substance to Pyrylyn. Thank you for

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your greetings; I return them in good faith. Good-bye."

He straightened and massaged his face: warmlooking over great light distances was always tiring, as if the sensitive muscles of the countenance knew that they delivered up their tiny electrostatic charges to parsecs of vacuum, and were appalled. Slowly his boscises also relaxed, as slowly he gathered together his gear. It would be a long flight to the Veil, and the task that had been set him would daunt the stoutest heart on Earth; yet it was for another reason he lingered: before he could be away, he had to say a farewell to his Mistress.

Dilating the door, he stepped out into the corridor, walked along it with a steady tread—feet covering mosaics of a pattern learnt long ago in his childhood—and walked into the paragravity shaft. Moments later, he was leaving the main hall, approaching My Lady as she stood gaunt, with her rodents scuttling at beast level before her and Vatna Jokull's heights rising behind her, grey with the impurities of distance.

"Go indoors and fetch me the box of name rings, Hols," she said to me; so I passed him, My Lord, as he went to her. He noticed me no more than he noticed any of the other parthenos.

When I returned, she had not turned towards him, though he was speaking urgently to her.

"You know I have my duty to perform, Mistress," I heard him saying. "Nobody else but a normal-born Earthborn can be entrusted with this sort of task."

"This sort of task! The galaxy is loaded inexhaustibly with such tasks! You can excuse yourself for ever with such excursions."

He said to her remote back, pleadingly: "You can't talk of them like that. You know of the nature of the Cliff—I told you all about it. You know this isn't an excursion: it requires all the courage I have. And you know that only Earthborns, for some reason, have such courage . . . Don't you, mistress?"

Although I had come up to them, threading my subservient way between cage and tank, they noticed me not enough even to lower their voices. My Lady stood gazing at the grey heights inland, her countenance as formidable as they; one boscis twitched as she said, "You think you are so big and brave, don't you?"

Knowing the power of sympathetic magic, she never spoke his name when she was angry; it was as if she wished him to disappear.

"It isn't that," he said humbly. "Please be reasonable, Mistress; you know I must go; a man cannot be forever at home. Don't be angry."

She turned to him at last.

Her face was high and stern; it

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did not receive. Yet she had a beauty of some dreadful kind I cannot describe, if weariness and knowledge can together knead beauty. Her eyes were as grey and distant as the frieze of snow-covered volcano behind her, O My Lady! She was a century older than Derek: though the difference showed not in her skin—which would stay fresh yet a thousand years—but in her authority.

"I'm not angry. I'm only hurt. You know how you have the power to hurt me."

"Mistress—," he said, taking a step towards her.

"Don't touch me," she said. "Go if you must, but don't make a mockery of it by touching me."

He took her elbow. She held one of the minicoypus quiet in the crook of her arm—animals were always docile at her touch—and strained it closer.

"I don't mean to hurt you, Mistress. You know we owe allegiance to Star One; I must work for them, or how else do we hold this estate? Let me go for once with an affectionate parting."

"Affection! You go off and leave me alone with a handful of parthenos and you talk of affection! Don't pretend you don't rejoice to get away from me. You're tired of me, aren't you?"

Wearily he said, as if nothing else would come, "It's not that . . ."

"You see! You don't even attempt to sound sincere. Why don't you go? It doesn't matter what happens to me."

"Oh, if you could only hear your own self-pity."

Now she had a tear on the icy slope of one cheek. Turning, she flashed it for his inspection.

"Who else should pity me? You don't, or you wouldn't go away from me as you do. Suppose you get killed by this Cliff, what will happen to me?"

"I shall be back, Mistress," he said. "Never fear."

"It's easy to say. Why don't you have the courage to admit that you're only too glad to leave me?"

"Because I'm not going to be provoked into a quarrel."

"Pah, you sound like a child again. You won't answer, will you? Instead you're going to run away, evading your responsibilities."

"I'm not running away!"

"Of course you are, whatever you pretend. You're just immature."

"I'm not, I'm not! And I'm not running away! It takes real courage to do what I'm going to do."

"You think so well of yourself!"

He turned away then, petulantly, without dignity. He began to head towards the landing platform. He began to run.

"Derek!", she called.

He did not answer.

She took the squatting minicoypu by the scruff of its neck.

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Angrily she flung it into the nearby tank of water. It turned into a fish and swam down into the depths.

II

Derek journeyed towards the Veil Nebula in his fast lightpusher. Lonely it sailed, a great fin shaped like an archer's bow, barnacled all over with the photon cells that sucked its motive power from the dense and dusty emptiness of space. Midway along the trailing edge was the blister in which Derek lay, senseless over most of his voyage.

He woke in the therapeutic bed, called to another resurrection day that was no day, with gentle machine hands easing the stiffness from his muscles. Soup gurgled in a retort, bubbling up towards a nipple only two inches from his mouth. He drank. He slept again, tired from his long inactivity.

When he woke again, he climbed slowly from the bed and exercised for fifteen minutes. Then he moved forward to the controls. My friend Jon was there.

"How is everything?" Derek asked.

"Everything is in order, My Lord," Jon replied. "We are swinging into the orbit of Festi XV now." He gave the coordinates and retired to eat. Jon's job was the loneliest any patherno could have. We are hatched according to strictly controlled formulae, without the inbred organisations of DNA that assure true Earthborns of their amazing longevity; five more long hauls and Jon will be old and worn out, fit only for the transmuter.

Derek sat at the controls. Did he see, superimposed on the face of Festi, the face he loved and feared? I think he did. I think there were no swirling clouds for him that could erase the clouding of her brow.

Whatever he saw, he settled the lightpusher into a fast low orbit about the desolate planet. The sun Festi was little more than a blazing point some eight hundred million miles away. Like the riding light of a ship it bobbed above a turbulent sea of cloud as they went in.

For a long while, Derek sat with his face in a receptor bowl, checking ground heats far below. Since he was dealing with temperatures approaching absolute zero, this was not simple; yet when the Cliff moved into a position directly below, there was no mistaking its bulk; it stood out as clearly on his senses as if outlined on a radar screen.

"There she goes!" Derek exclaimed.

Jon had come forward again. He fed the time coordinates into the lightpusher's brain, waited, and read off the time when the Cliff would be below them again.

Nodding, Derek began to pre-

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pare to jump. Without haste, he assumed his special suit, checking each item as he took it up, opening the paragravs until he floated, then closing them again, clicking down every snap-fastener until he was entirely encased.

"395 seconds to next zenith, My Lord," Jon said.

"You know all about collecting me?"

"Yes, sir."

"I shall not activate the radio beacon till I'm back in orbit."

"I fully understand, sir."

"Right. I'll be moving."

A little animated prison, he walked ponderously into the air lock.

Three minutes before they were next above the Cliff, Derek opened the outer door and dived into the sea of cloud. A brief blast of his suit jets set him free from the lightpusher's orbit. Cloud engulfed him like death as he fell.

The twenty surly planets that swung round Festi held only an infinitesimal fraction of the mysteries of the galaxy. Every globe in the universe huddled its own secret purpose to itself. On some of those globes, as on Earth, the purpose manifested itself in a type of being that could shape itself, burst into the space lanes, and rough-hew its aims in a civilized extra-planetary environment. On others, the purpose remained aloof and dark; only Earthborns, weaving their obscure patterns of will and compulsion, challenged those alien beings, to wrest from them new knowledge that might be added to the pool of the old.

All knowledge has its influence. Over the millennia since interstellar flight had become practicable, mankind was insensibly moulded by its own findings; together with its lost innocence, its genetic stability went out of the galactic window. As man fell like rain over other planets, so his strain lost its original hereditary design: each centre of civilization bred new ways of thought, of feeling, of shape—of life. Only on old Earth itself did man still somewhat resemble the men of pre-stellar days.

That was why it was an Earthborn who dived head-first to meet an entity called the Cliff.

The Cliff had destroyed each of the few spaceships or lightpushers that had landed on its desolate globe. After long study of the being from safe orbits, the wise men of Star One evolved the theory that it destroyed any considerable source of power, as a man will swat a buzzing fly. Derek Ende, going alone with no powering but his suit motors, would be safe—or so the theory went.

Riding down on the paragravs, he sank more and more slowly into planetary night. The last of the cloud was whipped from about his shoulders and a high wind thrummed and whistled round the

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supporters of his suit. Beneath him, the ground loomed. So as not to be blown across it, he speeded his rate of fall; next moment he sprawled full length on Festi XV. For a while he lay there, resting and letting his suit cool.

The darkness was not complete. Though almost no solar light touched this continent, green flares grew from the earth, illuminating its barren contours. Wishing to accustom his eyes to the gloom, he did not switch on his head, shoulder, stomach, or hand lights.

Something like a stream of fire flowed to his left. Because its radiance was poor and guttering, it confused itself with its own shadows, so that the smoke it gave off, distorted into bars by the bulk of the 4G planet, appeared to roll along its course like burning tumbleweed. Further off were larger sources of fire, impure ethane and methane most probably, burning with a sound that came like frying steak to Derek's ears, and spouting upwards with an energy that licked the lowering cloud race with blue light. At another point, blazing on an eminence, a geyser of flame wrapped itself in a thickly swirling mantle of brown smoke, a pall that spread upwards as slowly as porridge. Elsewhere, a pillar of white fire burnt without motion or smoke; it stood to the right of where Derek lay, like a floodlit sword in its perfection.

He nodded approval to himself. His drop had been successfully placed. This was the Region of Fire, where the Cliff lived.

To lie there was content enough, to gaze on a scene never closely viewed by man fulfillment enough—until he realised that a wide segment of landscape offered not the slightest glimmer of illumination. He looked into it with a keen warmsight, and found it was the Cliff.

The immense bulk of the thing blotted out all light from the ground and rose to eclipse the cloud over its crest.

At the mere sight of it, Derek's primary and secondary hearts began to beat out a hastening pulse of awe. Stretched flat on the ground, his paragravs keeping him level to IG, he peered ahead at it; he swallowed to clear his choked throat; his eyes strained through the mosaic of dull light in an effort to define the Cliff.

One thing was sure: it was large! He cursed that although photosistors allowed him to use his warmsight on objects beyond the suit he wore, this sense was distorted by the eternal firework display. Then in a moment of good seeing he had an accurate fix: the Cliff was three quarters of a mile away! From first observations, he had thought it to be no more than a hundred yards distant.

Now he knew how large it was. It was enormous!

Momentarily he gloated. The

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only sort of tasks worth being set were impossible ones. Star One's astrophysicists held the notion that the Cliff was in some sense aware, they required Derek to take them a pound of its flesh. How do you carve a being the size of a small moon?

All the time he lay there, the wind jarred along the veins and supporters of his suit. Gradually, it occurred to Derek that the vibration he felt from this constant motion was changed. It carried a new note and a new strength. He looked about, placed his gloved hand outstretched on the ground.

The wind was no longer vibrating. It was the earth that shook, Festi itself that trembled. The Cliff was moving!

When he looked back up at it with both his senses, he saw which way it headed. Jarring steadily, it bore down on him.

"If it has intelligence, then it will reason—if it has detected me—that I am too small to offer it harm. So it will offer me none and I have nothing to fear," Derek told himself. The logic did not reassure him.

An absorbent pseudopod, activated by a simple humidity gland in the brow of his helmet, slid across his forehead and removed the sweat that formed there.

Visibility fluttered like a rag in a cellar. The slow forward surge of the Cliff was still something Derek sensed rather than saw. Now the rolling mattresses of cloud blotted the thing's crest, as it in its turn eclipsed the fountains of fire. To the jar of its approach even the marrow of Derek's bones raised a response.

Something else also responded.

The legs of Derek's suit began to move. The arms moved. The body wriggled.

Puzzled, Derek stiffened his legs. Irresistably, the knees of the suit hinged, forcing his own to do likewise. And not only his knees: his arms too, stiffly though he braced them on the ground before him, were made to bend to the whim of the suit. He could not keep still without breaking bones.

Thoroughly alarmed he lay there, flexing contortedly to keep rhythm with his suit, performing the gestures of an idiot.

As if it had suddenly learnt to crawl, the suit began to move forward. It shuffled forward over the ground; Derek inside went willy-nilly with it.

One ironic thought struck him. Not only was the mountain coming to Mohammed; Mohammed was perforce going to the mountain . . .

III

Nothing he could do checked his progress; he was no longer master of his movements; his will was useless. With the realisation rode a sense of relief. His Mistress

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could hardly blame him for anything that happened now.

Through the darkness he went on hands and knees, blundering in the direction of the on-coming Cliff, prisoner in an animated prison.

The only constructive thought that came to him was that his suit had somehow become subject to the Cliff. How, he did not know or try to guess. He crawled. He was almost relaxed now, letting his limbs move limply with the suit movements.

Smoke furled him about. The vibrations ceased, telling him that the Cliff was stationary again. Raising his head, he could see nothing but smoke—produced perhaps by the Cliff's mass as it scraped over the ground. When the blur parted, he glimpsed only darkness. The thing was directly ahead!

He blundered on. Abruptly he began to climb, still involuntarily aping the movements of his suit.

Beneath him was a doughy substance, tough yet yielding. The suit worked its way heavily upwards at an angle of something like sixty-five degrees; the stiffeners creaked, the paragravs throbbed. He was ascending the Cliff.

By this time there was no doubt in Derek's mind that the thing possessed what might be termed volition, if not consciousness. It possessed too a power no man could claim: it could impart that volition to an inanimate object like his suit. Helpless inside it, he carried his considerations a stage further. This power to impart volition seemed to have a limited range: otherwise the Cliff would surely not have bothered to move its gigantic mass at all, but would have forced the suit to traverse all the distance between them. If this reasoning were sound, then the lightpusher was safe from capture in orbit.

The movement of his arms distracted him. His suit was tunnelling. Giving it no aid, he lay and let his hands make swimming motions. If it was going to bore into the Cliff, then he could only conclude he was about to be digested: yet he stilled his impulse to struggle, knowing that struggle was fruitless.

Thrusting against the doughy stuff, the suit burrowed into it and made a sibilant little world of movement and friction which stopped directly it stopped, leaving Derek embedded in the most solid kind of isolation.

To ward off growing claustrophobia, he attempted to switch on his headlight; his suit arms remained so stiff he could not bend them enough to reach the toggle. All he could do was lie there helplessly in his shell and stare into the featureless darkness of the Cliff.

But the darkness was not en-

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tirely featureless. His ears detected a constant *slither* along the outside surfaces of his suit. His warmsight discerned a meaningless pattern beyond his helmet. Though he focussed his boscises, he could make no sense of the pattern; it had neither symmetry nor meaning for him . . .

Yet for his body it seemed to have some meaning. Derek felt his limbs tremble, was aware of pulses and phantom impressions within himself that he had not known before. The realisation percolated through to him that he was in touch with powers of which he had *no cognisance—and, conversely,* that something was in touch with him that had no cognisance of his powers.

An immense heaviness overcame him. The forces of life laboured within him. He sensed more vividly than before the vast bulk of the Cliff. Though it was dwarfed by the mass of Festi XV, it was as large as a good-sized asteroid . . . He could picture an asteroid, formed from a jetting explosion of gas on the face of Festi the sun. Half-solid, half-molten, it swung about its parent on an eccentric orbit. Cooling under an interplay of pressures, its interior crystallised into a unique form. So, with its surface semi-plastic, it existed for many millions of years, gradually accumulating an electrostatic charge that poised . . . and waited . . . and brewed the life acids about its crystalline heart.

Festi was a stable system, but once in every so many thousands of millions of years, the giant first, second, and third planets achieved perihelion with the sun and with each other simultaneously. This happened coincidentally with the asteroid's nearest approach; it was wrenched from its orbit and all but grazed the three lined-up planets. Vast electrical and gravitational forces were unleashed. The asteroid glowed: and woke to consciousness. Life was not born on it: it was born to life, born in *one cataclysmic clash!*

Before it had more than mutely savoured the sad-sharp-sweet sensation of consciousness, it was in trouble. Plunging away from the sun on its new course, it found itself snared in the gravitational pull of the 4G planet, Festi XV. It knew no shaping force but gravity; gravity was to it all that oxygen was to cellular life on Earth; yet it had no wish to exchange its flight for captivity; yet it was too puny to resist. For the first time, the asteroid recognised that its consciousness had a use, in that it could to some extent control its environment outside itself. Rather than risk being broken up in Festi's orbit, it sped inwards, and by retarding its own fall performed its first act of volition, an act that brought it down shaken but entire on the planet's surface.

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For an immeasureable period, the asteroid—but now it was the Cliff—lay in the shallow crater formed by its impact, speculating without thought. It knew nothing except the inorganic scene about it, and could visualise nothing else, but that scene it knew well. Gradually it came to some kind of terms with the scene. Formed by gravity, it used gravity as thoughtlessly as a man uses breath; it began to move other things, and it began to move itself.

That it should be other than alone in the universe had never occurred to the Cliff. Now it knew there was other life, it accepted the fact. The other life was not as it was; that it accepted. The other life had its own requirements; that it accepted. Of questions, of doubt, it did not know. It had a need; so did the other life; they should both be accommodated, for accommodation was the adjustment to pressure, and that response it comprehended.

Derek Ende's suit began to move again under external volition. Carefully it worked its way backwards. It was ejected from the Cliff. It lay still.

Derek himself lay still. He was barely conscious.

In a half daze, he was piecing together what had happened.

The Cliff had communicated with him; if he ever doubted that, the evidence of it lay clutched in the crook of his left arm.

"Yet it did not—yet it could not communicate with me!", he murmured. But it had communicated: he was still faint with the burden of it.

The Cliff had nothing like a brain. It had not 'recognised' Derek's brain. Instead, it had communicated with the only part of him it could recognise; it had communicated direct to his cell organisation, and in particular probably to those cytoplasmic structures, the mitochondria, the power sources of the cell. His brain had been by-passed, his own cells had taken in the information offered.

He recognised his feeling of weakness. The Cliff had drained him of power. Even that could not drain his feeling of triumph. For the Cliff had taken information even as it gave it. The Cliff had learnt that other life existed in other parts of the universe.

Without hesitation, without debate, it had given a fragment of itself to be taken to those other parts of the universe. Derek's mission was completed.

In the Cliff's gesture, Derek read one of the deepest urges of living things: the urge to make an impression on another living thing. Smiling wryly, he pulled himself to his feet.

He was alone in the Region of Fire. The occasional mournful flame still confronted its surrounding dark, but the Cliff had disap-

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peared; he had lain on the threshold of consciousness longer than he thought. He looked at his chronometer, to find it was high time he moved towards his rendezvous with the lightpusher. Stepping up his suit heating to combat the cold that began to seep through his bones, he revved up the paragrav unit and rose. The noisome clouds came down and engulfed him; Festi was lost to view. Soon he had risen beyond cloud or atmosphere.

Under Jon's direction, the space craft homed onto Derek's radio beacon. After a few tricky minutes, they matched velocities and Derek climbed aboard.

"Are you all right?", the partheno asked, as his master staggered into a flight seat.

"Fine—just weak. I'll tell you all about it as I do a report on spool for Pyrylyn. They're going to be pleased with us."

He produced a yellowy grey blob of matter that had expanded to the size of a large turkey and held it out to Jon.

"Don't touch this with your bare hands. Put it in one of the low-temperature lockers under 4Gs. It's a little souvenir from Festi XV."

IV

The Eyebright in Pynnati, one of Pyrylyn's capital cities, was where you went to enjoy yourself on the most lavish scale possible. This was where Derek Ende's hosts took him, with Jon in self-effacing attendance.

They lay in a nest of couches which slowly revolved, giving them a full view of other dance and couch parties. The room itself moved. Its walls were transparent; through them could be seen an ever-changing view as the room slid up and down and about the great metal framework of the Eyebright. First they were on the outside of the structure, with the bright night lights of Pynnati winking up at them as if intimately involved in their delight. Then they slipped inwards in the slow evagination of the building, to be surrounded by other pleasure rooms, their revellers clearly visible as they moved grandly up or down or along.

Uneasily, Derek lay on his couch. A vision of his mistress's face was before him; he could imagine how she would treat all this harmless festivity: with cool contempt. His own pleasure was consequently reduced to ashes.

"I suppose you'll be moving back to Earth as soon as possible?"

"Eh?" Derek grunted.

"I said, I supposed you would soon be going home again." The speaker was Belix Ix Sappose, Chief Administrator of High Gee Research at Star One; as Derek's host of the evening, he lay next to him.

"I'm sorry, Belix, yes—I shall

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have to head back for home soon."

"No 'have to' about it. You have discovered an entirely new life form; we can now attempt communication with the Festi XV entity, with goodness knows what extension of knowledge. The government can easily show its gratitude by awarding you any sort of post here you care to name; I am not without influence in that respect, as you are aware. I don't imagine that Earth in its senescent stage has much to offer a man of your calibre."

Derek thought of what it had to offer. He was bound to it. These decadent people did not understand how anything could be binding.

"Well, what do you say, Ende? I'm not speaking idly." Belix Ix Sappose tapped his antler system impatiently.

"Er . . . Oh, they will discover a great deal from the Cliff. That doesn't concern me. My part of the work is over. I'm just a field worker, not an intellectual."

"You don't reply to my suggestion."

He looked at Belix with only slight vexation. Belix was an unglaat, one of a species that had done as much as any to bring about the peaceful concourse of the galaxy. His backbone branched into an elaborate antler system, from which six sloe-dark eyes surveyed Derek with unblinking irritation. Other members of the party, including Jupkey, Belix's female, were also looking at him.

"I must get back to Earth soon," Derek said. What had Belix said? Offered some sort of post? Restlessly he shifted on his couch, under pressure as always when surrounded by people he knew none too well.

"You are bored, Mr. Ende."

"No, not at all. My apologies, Belix. I'm overcome as always by the luxury of Eyebright. I was watching the nude dancers."

"I fear you are bored."

"Not at all, I assure you."

"May I get you a woman?"

"No, thank you."

"A boy, perhaps?"

"No, thank you."

"Have you ever tried the flowering asexuals from the Cphids?"

"Not at present, thank you."

"Then perhaps you will excuse us if Jupkey and I remove our clothes and join the dance," Belix said stiffly.

As they moved out onto the dance floor to greet the strepent trumpets, Derek heard Jupkey say something of which he caught only the words "arrogant Earthborn." His eyes met Jon's; he saw that the partheno had overheard also.

In an instinctive dismissive gesture of his left hand, Derek revealed his mortification. He rose and began to pace round the room. Often he shouldered his way through a knot of naked dancers, ignoring their complaints.

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At one of the doors, a staircase was floating by. He stepped onto it to escape from the crowds.

Four young women were passing down the stairs. They were gaily dressed, with sonant-stones pulsing on their costumes. In their faces youth kept its lantern, lighting them as they laughed and chattered. Derek stopped and beheld the girls. One of them he recognised. Instinctively he called her name: "Eva!"

She had already seen him. Waving her companions on, she came back to him, dancing up the intervening steps.

"So the brave Earthborn climbs once more the golden stairs of Pynnati! Well, Derek Ende, your eyes are as dark as ever, and your brow as high!"

As he looked at her, the strepent trumpets were in tune for him for the first time that evening, and his delight rose up in his throat.

"Eva! . . . And your eyes as bright as ever . . . And you have no man with you."

"The powers of coincidence work on your behalf." She laughed —yes, he remembered that sound! —and then said more seriously, "I heard you were here with Belix Sappose and his female; so I was making the grandly foolish gesture of coming to see you. You remember how devoted I am to foolish gestures."

"So foolish?"

"Probably. You have less change in you, Derek Ende, than the core of Pyrylyn. To suppose otherwise is foolish, to know how unalterable you are and still to see you doubly foolish."

He took her hand, beginning to lead her up the staircase; the rooms moving by them on either side were blurs to his eyes.

"Must you still bring up that old charge, Eva?"

"It lies between us; I do not have to touch it. I fear your unchangeability because I am a butterfly against your grey castle."

"You are beautiful, Eva, so beautiful!—And may a butterfly not rest unharmed on a castle wall?" He fitted into her allusive way of speech with difficulty.

"Walls! I cannot bear your walls, Derek! Am I a bulldozer that I should want to come up against walls? To be either inside or outside them is to be a prisoner."

"Let us not quarrel until we have found some point of agreement," he said. "Here are the stars. Can't we agree about them?"

"If we are both indifferent to them," she said, looking out and impudently winding his arm about her. The staircase had reached the zenith of its travels and moved slowly sideways along the upper edge of Eyebright. They stood on the top step with night flashing their images back at them from the glass.

Eva Coll-Kennerley was a hu-

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man, but not of Earthborn stock. She was a velure, born on the y-cluster worlds of the dense Third Arm of the galaxy, and her skin was richly covered with the brown fur of her kind. Her mercurial talents were employed in the same research department that enjoyed Belix Sappose's more sober ones; Derek had met her there on an earlier visit to Pyrylyn. Their love had been an affair of swords.

He looked at her now and touched her and could say not one word for himself. When she flashed a liquid eye at him, he essayed an awkward smile.

"Because I am oriented like a compass towards strong men, my lavish offer to you still holds good. Is it not bait enough?" she asked him.

"I don't think of you as a trap, Eva."

"Then for how many more centuries are you going to refrigerate your nature on Earth? You still remain faithful, if I recall your euphemism for slavery, to your Mistress, to her cold lips and locked heart?"

"I have no choice!"

"Ah yes, my debate on that motion was defeated: and more than once. Is she still pursuing her researches into the transmutability of species?"

"Oh yes, indeed. The mediaeval idea that one species can turn into another was foolish in the Middle Ages; now, with the gradual accumulation of cosmic radiation in planetary bodies, it is correct to a certain definable extent. She is endeavouring to show that cellular bondage can be—"

"Yes, yes, and this serious talk is an eyesore in Eyebright! You are locked away, Derek, doing your sterile deeds of heroism and never entering the real world. If you imagine you can live with her much longer and then come to me, you are mistaken. Your walls grow higher about your ears every century, till I cannot cannot—oh, it's the wrong metaphor!—cannot scale you!"

Even in his pain, the texture of her fur was joy to his warmsight. Helplessly he shook his head in an effort to shake her clattering words away.

"Look at you being big and brave and silent even now! You're so arrogant," she said—and then, without perceptible change of tone, "Because I still love the bit of you inside the castle, I'll make once more my monstrous and petty offer to you."

"No, please, Eva!—"

"But yes! Forget this tedious bondage of Earth, forget this ghastly matriarchy, live here with me. I don't want you for ever. You know I am a eudemonist and judge by standards of pleasure—our liaison need be only for a century or two. In that time, I will deny you nothing your senses may require."

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"Eva!"

"After that, our demands will be satisfied. You may then go back to the Lady Mother of Endehaaven for all I care."

"Eva, you know how I spurn this belief, this eudemonism."

"Forget your creed! I'm asking you nothing difficult. Who are you to haggle? Am I fish, to be bought by the kilo, this bit selected, this rejected?"

He was silent.

"You don't really need me," he said at last. "You have everything already: beauty, wit, sense, warmth, feeling, balance, comfort. *She* has nothing. She is shallow, haunted, cold—oh, she needs me, Eva . . ."

"You are apologising for yourself, not her."

She had already turned with the supple movement of a velure and was running down the staircase. Lighted chambers drifted up about them like bubbles.

His laboured attempt to explain his heart turned to exasperation. He ran down after her, grasping her arm.

"Listen to me, will you, damn you!"

"Nobody in Pyrylyn would listen to such masochistic nonsense as yours! You are an arrogant fool, Derek, and I am a weak-willed one. Now release me!"

As the next room came up, she jumped through its entrance and disappeared into the crowd.

V

Not all the drifting chambers of Eyebright were lighted. Some pleasures come more delightfully with the dark, and these pleasures were coaxed and cossetted into fruition in shrouded halls where illumination cast only the gentlest ripple on the ceiling and the gloom was sensuous with ylang-ylang and other perfumes. Here Derek found a place to weep.

Sections of his life slid before him as if impelled by the same mechanisms that moved Eyebright. Always, one presence was there.

Angrily he related to himself how he always laboured to satisfy her—yes, in every sphere laboured to satisfy her! And how when that satisfaction was accorded him it came as though riven from her, as a spring sometimes trickles down the split face of a rock. Undeniably there was satisfaction for him in drinking from that cool source—but no, where was the satisfaction when pleasure depended on such extreme disciplining and subduing of himself?

Mistress, I love and hate your needs!

And the discipline had been such . . . so long, also . . . that now when he might enjoy himself far from her, he could scarcely strike a trickle from his own rock. He had walked here before, in this city where the hedonists and eudemonists reigned, walked among

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the scents of pleasure, walked among the ioblepharous women, the beautiful guests and celebrated beauties, with My Lady always in him, feeling that she showed even on his countenance. People spoke to him: somehow he replied. They manifested gaiety: he tried to do so. They opened to him: he attempted a response. All the time, he hoped they would understand that his arrogance masked only shyness—or did he hope that it was his shyness which masked arrogance? He did not know.

Who could presume to know? The one quality holds much of the other. Both refuse to come forward and share.

He roused from his meditation knowing that Eva Coll-Kennerley was again somewhere near. She had not left the building, then! She was seeking him out!

Derek half-rose from his position in a shrouded alcove. He was baffled to think how she could have traced him here. On entering Eyebright, visitors were given sonant-stones, by which they could be traced from room to room; but judging that nobody would wish to trace him, Derek had switched his stone off even before leaving Belix Sappose's party.

He heard Eva's voice, its unmistakeable overtones not near, not far . . .

"You find the most impenetrable bushels to hide your light under . . ."

He caught no more. She had sunk down among tapestries with someone else. She was not after him at all! Waves of relief and regret rolled over him . . . and when he paid attention again, she was speaking his name.

With shame on him, like a wolf creeping towards a camp fire, he crouched forward to listen. At once his warmsight told him to whom Eva spoke. He recognised the pattern of the antlers; Belix was there, with Jupkey sprawled beside him on some elaborate kind of bed.

". . . useless to try again. Derek is too far entombed within himself," Eva said.

"Entombed rather within his conditioning," Belix said. "We found the same. It's conditioning, my dear."

"However he became entombed, I still admire him enough to want to understand him." Eva's voice was a note or two astray from its usual controlled timbre.

"Look at it scientifically," Belix said, with the weighty inflections of a man about to produce truth out of a hat. "Earth is the last bastion of a bankrupt culture. The Earthborns number less than a couple of millions now. They disdain social graces and occasions. They are served by parthenogenically bred slaves, all of which are built on the same controlled genetic formula. They are inbred. In consequence, they have become

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practically a species apart. You can see it all in friend Ende. As I say, he's entombed in his conditioning. A tragedy, Eva, but you must face up to it."

"You're probably right, you pontifical old pop," Jupkey said lazily. "Who but an Earthborn would do what Derek did on Festi?"

"No, no!" Eva said. "Derek's ruled by a woman, not by conditioning. He's—"

"In Ende's case they are one and the same thing, my dear, believe me. Consider Earth's social organisation. The partheno slaves have replaced all but a comparative handful of true Earthborns. That handful has parcelled out Earth into great estates which it holds by a sinister matriarchalism."

"Yes, I know, but Derek—"

"Derek is caught in the system. The Earthborns have fallen into a mating pattern for which there is no precedent. The sons of a family marry their mothers, not only to perpetuate their line but because the productive Earthborn female is scarce now that Earth itself is senescent. This is what the Endes have done; this is what Derek Ende has done. His 'mistress' is both mother and wife to him. Given the factor of longevity as well —well, naturally you ensure an excessive emotional rigidity that almost nothing can break. Not even you, my sweet-coated Eva!"

"He was on the point of breaking tonight!"

"I doubt it," Belix said. "Ende may want to get away from his claustrophobic home, but the same forces that drive him off will eventually lure him back."

"I tell you he was on the point of breaking—only I broke first."

"Well, as Teer Ruche said to me many centuries ago, only a pleasure-hater knows how to shape a pleasure-hater. I would say you were lucky he did not break; you would only have had a baby on your hands."

Her answering laugh did not ring true.

"My Lady of Endehaaven, then, must be the one to do it. I will never try again—though he seems under too much stress to stand for long. Oh, it's really immoral! He deserves better!"

"A moral judgement from you, Eva!", Jupkey exclaimed amusedly to the fragrant gloom.

"My advice to you, Eva, is to forget all about the poor fellow. Apart from anything else, he is barely articulate—which would not suit you for a season."

The unseen listener could bear no more. A sudden rage—as much against himself for hearing as against them for speaking—burst over him, freeing him to act. Straightening up, he seized the arm of the couch on which Belix and Jupkey nestled, wildly supposing he could tip them onto the floor.

Too late, his warmsight warned

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him of the real nature of the couch. Instead of tipping, it swivelled, sending a wave of liquid over him. The two unglaats were lying in a warm bath scented with ylang-ylang and other essences.

Jupkey squealed in anger and fright. Kicking out, she caught Derek on the shin with a hoof; he slipped in the oily liquid and fell. Belix, unaided by warmsight, jumped out of the bath, entangled himself with Derek's legs, and also fell.

Eva was shouting for lights. Other occupants of the hall cried back that darkness must prevail at all costs.

Picking himself up—leaving only his dignity behind—Derek ran for the exit, abandoning the confusion to sort itself out as it would.

Burningly, disgustedly, he made his way dripping from Eyebright. The hastening footsteps of Jon followed him like an echo all the way to the space field.

Soon he would be back at Endehaaven. Though he would always be a failure in his dealings with other humans, there at least he knew every inch of his bleak allotted territory.

ENVOI

Had there been a spell over all Endehaaven, it could have been no quieter when My Lord Derek Ende arrived home.

I informed My Lady of the moment when his lightpusher arrived and rode at orbit. In the receptor bowl I watched him and Jon come home, cutting north west across the emaciated wilds of Europe, across Denmark, over the Shetlands, the Faroes, the sea, alighting by the very edge of the island, by the fjord with its silent waters.

All the while the wind lay low as if under some stunning malediction, and none of our tall trees stirred.

"Where is my Mistress, Hols?", Derek asked me, as I went to greet him and assist him out of his suit.

"She asked me to tell you that she is confined to her chambers and cannot see you, My Lord."

He looked me in the eyes as he did so rarely.

"Is she ill?"

"No."

Without waiting to remove his suit, he hurried on into the building.

Over the next two days, he was about but little, preferring to remain in his room. Once he wandered among the experimental tanks and cages. I saw him net a fish and toss it into the air, watching it while it struggled into new form and flew away until it was lost in a jumbled background of cumulus; but it was plain he was less interested in the riddles of stress and transmutation than in

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the symbolism of the carp's flight.

Mostly he sat compiling the spools on which he imposed the tale of his life. All one wall was covered with files full of these spools: the arrested drumbeats of past centuries. From the later spools I have secretly compiled this record; for all his unspoken self-pity, he never knew the sickness of merely observing.

We parthenos will never understand the luxuries of a divided mind. Surely suffering as much as happiness is a kind of artistry?

On the day that he received a summons from Star One to go upon another quest for them, Derek met My Lady in the Blue Corridor.

"It is good to see you about again, Mistress," he said, kissing her cheek.

She stroked his hair. On her nervous hand she wore one ring with an amber stone; her gown was of olive and umber.

"I was very upset to have you go away from me. The Earth is dying, Derek, and I fear its loneliness. You have left me alone too much. However, I have recovered myself and am glad to see you back."

"You know I am glad to see you. Smile for me and come outside for some fresh air. The sun is shining."

"It's so long since it shone. Do you remember how once it always shone? I can't bear to quarrel any more. Take my arm and be kind to me."

"Mistress, I always wish to be kind to you. And I have all sorts of things to discuss with you. You'll want to hear what I have been doing, and—"

"You won't leave me any more?"

He felt her hand tighten on his arm. She spoke very loudly.

"That was one of the things I wished to discuss—later," he said. "First let me tell you about the wonderful life form with which I made contact on Festi."

As they left the corridor and descended the paragravity shaft, My Lady said wearily, "I suppose that's a polite way of telling me that you are bored here."

He clutched her hands as they floated down. Then he released them and clutched her face instead.

"Understand this, Mistress mine, I love you and want to serve you. You are in my blood; wherever I go I never can forget you. My dearest wish is to make you happy—this you must know. But equally you must know that I have needs of my own."

Grumpily she said, withdrawing her face, "Oh, I know that all right. And I know those needs will always come first with you. Whatever you say or pretend, you don't care a rap about me. You make that all too clear."

She moved ahead of him, shaking off the hand he put on her

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arm. He had a vision of himself running down a golden staircase and stretching out that same detaining hand to another girl. The indignity of having to repeat oneself, century after century.

"You're lying! You're faking! You're being cruel!", he said.

Gleaming, she turned.

"Am I? Then answer me this—aren't you already planning to leave Endehaaven and me soon?"

He smote his forehead.

He said inarticulately, "Look, you must try to stop this recrimination. Yes, yes, it's true I am thinking . . . But I have to—I reproach myself. I could be kinder. But you shut yourself away when I come back, you don't welcome me—"

"Trust you to find excuses rather than face up to your own nature," she said contemptuously, walking briskly into the garden. Amber and olive and umber, and sable of hair, she walked down the path, her outlines sharp in the winter air; in the perspectives of his mind she did not dwindle.

For some minutes he stood in the threshold, immobilized by antagonistic emotions.

Finally he pushed himself out into the sunlight.

She was in her favourite spot by the fjord, feeding an old badger from her hand. Only her increased attention to the badger suggested that she heard him approach.

His boscises twitched as he said, "If you will forgive a cliché, I apologise."

"I don't mind what you do."

Walking backwards and forwards behind her, he said, "When I was away, I heard some people talking. On Pyrylyn this was. They were discussing the mores of our matrimonial system."

"It's no business of theirs."

"Perhaps not. But what they said suggested a new line of thought to me."

She put the old badger back in his cage without comment.

"Are you listening, Mistress?"

"Do go on."

"Try to listen sympathetically. Consider all the history of galactic exploration—or even before that, consider the explorers of Earth in the pre-space age, men like Shackleton and so on. They were brave men, of course, but wouldn't it be strange if most of them only ventured where they did because the struggle at home was too much for them?"

He stopped. She had turned to him; the half-smile was whipped off his face by her look of fury.

"And you're trying to tell me that that's how you see yourself—a martyr? Derek, how you must hate me! Not only do you go away, you secretly blame me because you go away. It doesn't matter that I tell you a thousand times I want you here—no, it's all my fault! I drive you away! That's what you

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tell your charming friends on Pyrylyn, isn't it? Oh, how you must hate me!"

Savagely he grasped her wrists. She screamed to me for aid and struggled. I came near but halted, playing my usual impotent part. He swore at her, bellowed for her to be silent, whereupon she cried the louder, shaking furiously in his arms.

He struck her across the face.

At once she was quiet. Her eyes closed: almost, it would seem, in ecstasy. Standing there, she had the pose of a woman offering herself.

"Go on, hit me! You want to hit me!" she whispered.

With the words, with the look of her, he too was altered. As if realising for the first time her true nature, he dropped his fists and stepped back, staring at her sick-mouthed. His heel met no resistance. He twisted suddenly, spread out his arms as if to fly, and fell over the cliff edge.

Her scream pursued him down.

Even as his body hit the waters of the fjord, it began to change. A flurry of foam marked some sort of painful struggle beneath the surface. Then a seal plunged into view, dived below the next wave, and swam towards open sea over which already a freshening breeze blew.

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Once upon a time, while we were waiting for a bus, an old man came along down the queue peddling Eskimo-pops. "Eskimo! Eskimo!" *he cried. At the same time, from the opposite direction, another old man appeared, hawking beygels.* "Beygels!" *he called.* "Beygels!" *It was inevitable that their paths should intersect, and we awaited the outcome with interest. Came the confrontation. The two venerable merchants examined one another for a moment in silence. Then the Eskimo-man purchased a beygel, and the beygel-man purchased an Eskimo-pop. They ate their goodies, wiped their mouths, then continued on their ways:* "Eskimo! Eskimo!" "Beygels! Beygels!" *The pertinence of this fascinating anecdote to the story below awaits only your reading to be made clear.*

THERE WAS AN OLD WOMAN WHO LIVED IN A SHOE

by Robert F. Young

ALPHA CENTAURI HAD YET TO resolve into two suns when the blip that later came to be known as "The Mark of Malthus" appeared on the matter-detector screen of *The Lord Is My Shepherd, I Shall Not Want.* Wells, the first mate, happened to be present in the radar room at the time, and took the report up to the bridge himself. His duties aboard a spaceship with a payload of three thousand and four passengers (at the last count) and one hundred and two crewmembers were legion, but he did not consider any matter to be beneath his personal attention provided it justified his disdain for positive thinking or could be used in any way to bug the captain. The blip fell into both categories, and represented a handsome find indeed.

Captain Ramm was standing in front of the bridge viewplate, looking out across the immensities to-

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ward the bright bonfire of Alpha Centauri. With his strong masculine face and sturdy well-proportioned body, he cut a fine figure, and he knew it. The girls in the passenger village knew it too, and from the way they acted in his presence you would have thought that he was one of his eleven handsome sons instead of a married man of fifty. Wells was only thirty, and unmarried to boot, but with his flabby-cheeked face and frail frame, he cut as sorry a figure as the captain did a fine one. The girls in the passenger village knew *that* too, and from the way they acted in *his* presence you would have thought that he was something the Gardener had found on the bottom of one of the hydroponic tanks.

At the navigator's desk, Niles, the navigator, was rechecking *The Lord Is My Shepherd, I Shall Not Want's* course. Stepping around the desk, Wells handed the captain the report. "Unusual, wouldn't you say, sir?" he asked.

Captain Ramm's pale blue eyes made short work of the terse little paragraph. "What's so unusual—or so important—about a meteor that won't come within ten thousand miles of us?"

"It's not a meteor," Wells said. "Its mass-velocity ratio indicates it to be a spaceship."

The captain about-faced. "Nonsense, Mr. Wells! You know as well as I do that *The Lord Is My Shepherd, I Shall Not Want* was the first EPD ship to leave Earth. Even assuming that one of the successive ships to leave could have overtaken and passed us without our knowledge, it could hardly have reversed its course and be approaching us from the opposite direction!"

"All of which," said Wells, enjoying himself keenly, "suggests that the ship in question *isn't* from Earth."

"That's blasphemy, Mr. Wells!"

"No it isn't—it's logic. It's all very well to insist that Earth is the chosen planet and that it and it alone is inhabited by intelligent beings and to admit of no other possibility; but a ship is a ship is a ship is a ship, and *has* to come from somewhere. So if this one didn't come from Earth, it must have come from some place else."

"That's enough of your wild surmising, Mr. Wells!" An ardent propagationist, the captain had no use whatsoever for neo-Malthusians, and whenever he pulled rank on one, he did so with a vengeance. "As soon as this precious object of yours comes within depth-scanning range, see to it that the necessary steps are taken to ascertain its true nature. Until then, keep your whimsical speculations to yourself!"

"Aye, aye, sir."

Wells saluted, and left the bridge. Before returning to the radar room, he took the lift up to

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Little Heaven, climbed into the patrol 'copter and made his daily aerial inspection of the ship's village. The ship's village pre-empted eighty percent of the huge sphere's interior and was everything a ship's village should be. There were houses and lawns and trees. There was an elementary school, a high school, a university, and a space academy. There was a library, a park, a hospital, a sun, a sky, and a supermarket. True, the supermarket was a front for a ration-distribution center, and the sky was as phony as the sun was, but the village was still a pleasant place for the successive generations of passengers—the sixth was just coming into being—to raise their children and worship the god of their choice.

The church where they worshipped the god of their choice stood in the center of the village square and was called, appropriately enough, The God-Of-Our-Choice Church. The God-Of-Our-Choice had come into his own long before the departure of *The Lord Is My Shepherd, I Shall Not Want,* and had superseded all other gods before him. Actually, people had been worshipping him ever since the middle of the twentieth century, but they had called him by different names, such as "Security", "Medical Aid for the Aged", "Pension Plan", "Federal Aid", "Parity", "Two Cars in every Garage", "Fast Buck", "Time-and-a-Half", "Seniority", and "Dr. Spock". Now they came right out and called him by his right name, and weren't in the least ashamed to put the words of the Good Book in his mouth.

Wells was, though. However, he was one of those unfortunate persons who have just enough intelligence to disapprove of the *status quo,* but not quite enough to be able to do anything about it. Such a dilemma invariably makes cynics out of those impaled upon its horns, and it was Wells' cynicism, combined with his unpopularity with women, that had led him into the beseiged camp of the Last of the neo-Malthusians, and it was his cynicism, combined with the burdensome and all-but-extinguished torch he had elected to carry, that had inspired the little game he had come to call "Bugging The Captain".

Upon his return to the radar room, he was informed by the operator-on-duty that the approaching UFO was not yet within depth-scanning range, but that it would be shortly. Wells spent the intervening time breaking down the information he wanted into a series of pertinent questions, then he punched out the questions on a scannercard and fed the card into the slot. Finally, at the operator's signal, he turned on the machine.

It was an elated first mate who, some fifteen minutes later, pounded up the companionway to the

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bridge. Captain Ramm was in conversation with the navigator, or, more accurately, the navigator was on the receiving end of a propagationist pep-talk. "The neo-Malthusians to the contrary, Mr. Niles," Captain Ramm was saying, "we are not sheep stampeding senselessly toward a cliff, all the while pretending that the cliff isn't there. Babies are man's birthright, and it is his bounden duty to create as many of them as he possibly can. That is why God-Of-Our-Choice put him upon the face of the earth and made the face of the earth green and filled the earth with good things for him to dig up and make shiny things out of. And just in case the good things should ever happen to run out and the greenness go away, God-Of-Our-Choice made Alpha Centauri Three so that man would have another place to go on propagating himself on . . . Yes, Mr. Wells?"

"I have ascertained the true nature of the approaching object," Wells said humbly. "Would the captain be interested in my findings?"

Captain Ramm regarded him blankly for a moment. Then, "Oh, you mean the meteor. Very well—proceed, Mr. Wells."

"It happens to be a spaceship, as I said before—not a meteor. It also happens to be a spaceship very much like our own. In a moment it will reach its point of nearest approach to *The Lord Is My Shepherd, I Shall Not Want,* and I've taken advantage of this brief period of proximity and arranged a telegam between you and the other captain. In a few seconds his face will appear on your personal viewscreen, and yours will appear on his. The language correlator will see to it that the historic remarks which both of you will undoubtedly utter are conveyed correctly to one another's ears." Wells handed a note to the navigator. "Adjust the screen to these co-ordinates, Niles."

Niles did so. Meanwhile, the thundercloud that had gathered on the captain's forehead took on a darker hue. "How dare you overstep your authority, Mr. Wells!" he demanded. "You—you advocate of the devil, you!"

"The exigencies of the situation leave me no choice, sir . . . There's the other captain now."

Despite its unusual features, the face that had popped into being on the screen was subtly human. The forehead was extremely high, and slanted outward into a blunt and bridgeless nose. Just beneath the nose was a small chinless mouth, and on either side of the forehead—or perhaps the nose; it was difficult to tell where one left off and the other began—was a round, BB-like eye. The ears were pointed, and set very high on the head, and between them sat a round object that disconcertingly resembled an officer's kepi.

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"Captain Squeel speaking," the alien said in a high-pitched voice. "I demand to know your destination!"

Captain Ramm was in the midst of a very bad moment. Nevertheless, he rose to the occasion admirably. "Captain Ramm speaking," was what he came back with. "I demand to know *your* destination!"

"Sol Three," said Captain Squeel.

"Alpha Centauri Three," said Captain Ramm.

For a moment the two officers gawked at each other. Then, "But you can't go to Sol Three—there's no room for you there!" said Captain Ramm.

"But you can't go to Alpha Centauri Three—there's no room for you there!" said Captain Squeel.

"I demand to know the purpose of your voyage!" shouted Captain Ramm.

"I demand to know the purpose of yours!" squealed Captain Squeel.

"The purpose of both," Wells interposed, "is the alleviation of population pressures through the founding of new colonies. Don't you see, Captain Ramm? They're in the same boat we are."

"Impossible! Two different races on two different planets couldn't possibly suffer simultaneous population crises!"

"Nor did they," said Wells. "Our excess-population dispersal ship is well past the halfway point in its journey, while theirs has yet to reach the halfway point. Since our two velocities are almost identical, that means that we left Earth almost half a century before they left Alpha Centauri Three."

Captain Squeel's image began to fade as the two ships drew rapidly apart. "Then all we're doing is exchanging places," he said in a sort of despairing squeek.

Captain Ramm's face looked like the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. "I'm afraid that's what it amounts to," he said. Then, remembering his noble calling, "*Bon voyage,* Captain Squeel."

"*Bon voyage,* Captain Ramm."

The screen went blank.

A silence settled on the bridge. Wells broke it. "There's an ancient nursery rhyme about an old woman who lived in a shoe and who had so many children she didn't know what to do," he said. "To my knowledge, she never tried to solve her problem, but if she had, she probably would have proceeded on the assumption that somewhere there was another shoe, and have sent her excess children out to look for it. It's fortunate that she didn't try, for if her excess children *had* found another shoe, they would have found it inhabited by another old woman who had so many children *she* didn't know what to do. Irresponsibility in the matter of offspring isn't a shortcoming one old woman can

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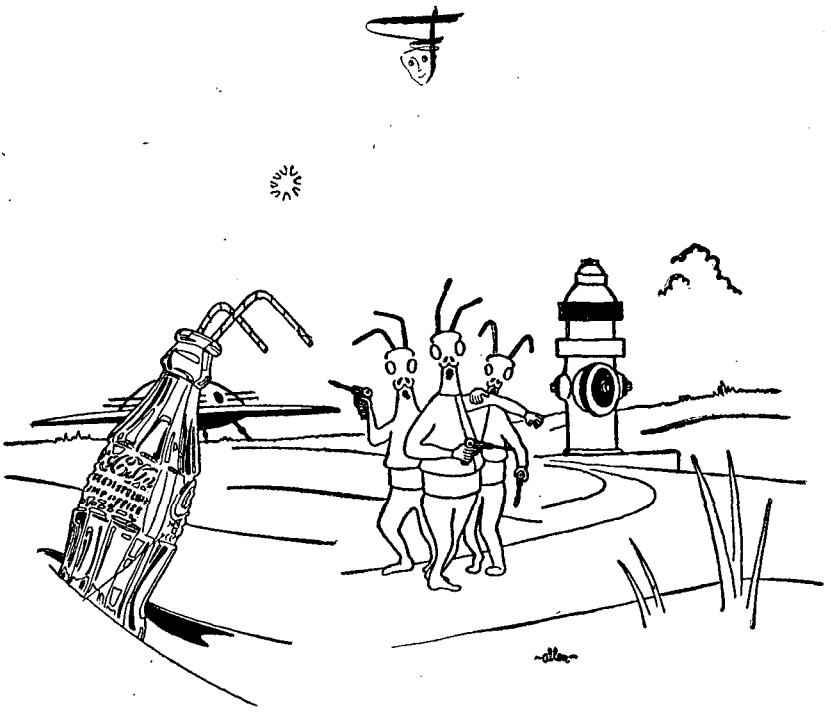
expect another, equally irresponsible, old woman to pay for—and vice versa."

"But we *can't* turn back," Niles said.

"Of course we can't—and there's no reason why we should. The Alpha Centauri Three civilization will welcome us. They'll welcome us for the simple reason that they'll know that if they don't, the Sol Three civilization won't welcome *their* excess children. But both civilizations are going to have to grow up and act their age."

There was a thoughtful as well as a rueful expression on the captain's face. "That alien made me think of a rat," he said.

Wells smiled. It was his moment in the sun, and he was enjoying it to the full. "He looked more like a Guinea pig to me," he said.



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Our mind is as broad as the next man's (and, increasingly, perhaps, our waiste-line, too), but we view with equally increasing dismay the growing tendency to have story titles as long as the stories themselves. Only the conviction that Mr. Don White, perpetrator of the outrage below, is a funny man, persuaded us to buy his story and pocket the cash-in value of his International Reply Coupons for ourselves. We rejected, you will be encouraged to hear, his next submission, which he had the presumption to entitle "Eril, Ethel, Maude, Zelda, Kitty, Tulip and Vanessa and the Leprechaun." He says of himself: "For the first sixteen years of my life I was a normal, maladjusted Londoner. Then I won a junior essay competition which boosted my life savings to the grand total of £25. This, I thought, would be as good a sum as any to finance a round-the-world tour. And it was. For the past ten years I have been creating international situations in Panama, playing bit parts in Hindustani movies, editing a film page in a Suva (Figi) weekly, and touting for a money changer in Ceylon. I also found time to acquire a unique collection of opera records (and opera singers), give lectures, write innumerable articles and a purely terrestrial travel book ('Get Up and Go', Wingate's London, 1959). I became inspired, Fantasy-wise, whilst travelling in the luggage racks of third-class Indian trains. All my characters are drawn from life (this always makes people wonder about me—and my friends!")

TWENTY-FOUR HOURS IN A PRINCESS'S LIFE, WITH FROGS

by Don White

PRINCESS PETUNIA WAS FAR and away the prettiest princess in Hans Christian Andersonville. As a matter of fact, this had been con-

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firmed again only an hour or so earlier.

"Mirror, mirror, on the wall, who is the fairest one of all?" She had asked, idly, in passing. It had replied with some idiotic rhyme, completely lacking in metre, to the effect that *she* was, in fact, the fairest one of all.

"That's nice," she had mused, "but after all, life ought to hold more for a girl than first prize in a cornucopian beauty contest." In fact, she had brought up the subject at her Wednesday afternoon with the girls.

"The daily Mirror says I'm the fairest one of all again . . ." Petunia began, conversationally, pouring a nectar cocktail.

"Congratulations!" said Princess Charming (formerly a commoner called Cinderella). She was the very nicest person in the whole land. Everybody, of course, hated her.

"Well, I'm not a bit surprised," Princess Rapunzel said, grudgingly. "You've not got a dam, blam thing to do all day but lay back at the Slenderella salon or Silhouette. Me, I'm forever mucking about with this horrid hair—just think, thirty three feet long and my prince still hasn't come. And now . . . dandruff," she moaned.

"Have you tried Max Factor's 'Wing of Bat and Eye of Toad Lotion'? They say it's spider-web sifted for extra purity," said Princess Aurora, munching a buttercup cake. "But Rapunzel's right," she told Petunia. "Look at me. A bundle of nerves. I can't get my mind off Old Mother Mellificent's curse. Even my analyst dreams about spinning wheels. You. You haven't a care in the world."

"What about me, though," signed Princess Beauty. "Saddled with an absolute Beast of a husband. I spend all my time wondering how I'm going to pay the veterinary surgeon's bills.

"Well, it's not my fault, girls," said Petunia, petulantly. "Blame muddle-headed Aunt Prue, the Good Witch of the West. She gave me LEISURE as a christening present, and I've been bored to death ever since."

"Oh, we're back on that again, are we," snapped Aurora. "We're going to waste another Wednesday reliving precious Princess Petunia's christening! It's all you ever talk about. Well, I have it on very good authority that some of the most questionable fairies in town got together at *that* shindig!"

"At least it didn't end up a Tchaikowskian orgy," Petunia retorted, heatedly.

"Please don't quarrel," said Cinderella Charming.

"Who asked you?" Aurora snarled, purple-faced. "You . . . you upstart, you! Don't worry, we've all got *your* fairy prince taped."

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Princess Charming burst into tears, pushed her toadstool away from the table, said "thank you for having me" and fled, weeping, down the ivory steps of Petunia's palace.

Petunia, Aurora, Beauty and Rapunzel helped themselves to an Ambrosia and tonic and sighed. "There she goes again," said Petunia, ringing a bluebell for the butler.

"Clean up that mess on the palace steps," she ordered. "It's about time the Good Housekeeping committee did something about glass slippers."

But Petunia felt sad as the girls drove away in their crystal coaches. Rapunzel's dandruff, Beauty's beast. Aurora's spinning wheel complex. She sighed. At least, they have something to fill their lives.

Petunia was finding life in Hans Christian Andersonville pretty grimm.

"I'm so lonely," she thought, poignantly.

That evening she decided to take a stroll into the enchanted wood at the foot of her magic garden.

When she came to Wishing Tree Glen, she took off her golden slippers and paddled her feet in the pixie pool.

Suddenly, magically, the water broke into myriad moonlit ripples and something wet, and unpleasant, landed in her lap.

"It's a frog!" she said.

And, indeed, it was.

The frog looked up at her, pop-eyed with fright. "Croak," it said.

Petunia looked down at the little green creature and said, "You are trying to tell me something."

"Croak," repeated the frog.

"I know!" Petunia cried, excitedly. "I know! You're really a handsome prince."

"Croak?"

"And Zelda, the Wicked Witch of the East has put a spell on you."

"Croak!" said the panic-stricken frog, trying to leap back into his lily pond.

But Petunia clutched the poor, damp thing the tighter and went on, ecstatically. "And you're looking for someone to love you, and when you find that someone, then the spell will be broken and you'll be a handsome prince once more."

"Croak, croak, croak!" said the frog, in a high-pitched croak, but Petunia would hear none of it, and kissed him happily on the snout. Then she slipped him into her beaded evening bag, and started back to the palace.

The King was in his counting house, counting all his money.

"Daddy, I want you to meet my fiance," said Petunia, happily, producing the frog.

"Very good, very good, my dear," said the king. "Go and talk to your mother about it."

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The Queen was in the parlour eating bread and honey. "Get that monster out of here," she screamed, standing on the table and holding up her skirts. "Get it out, do you hear! The family wedding ring is in the cookie jar —if the knave of hearts hasn't stolen it again—and the Grand Vizier will marry you, but GET THAT TOAD OUT OF HERE!"

"Take no notice," cooed Petunia to the frog. "She nearly got eaten once by a dragon—when she was a virgin—and she's had this mental bloc ever since."

"Do you, Petunia Pureheart, take this frog to be your awfully, lawfully wedded husband?"

"You bet! I mean, I do," she replied.

Then: "Oh, you doll!" she said to the frog after the ceremony, waltzing around and around in the ballroom to the strains of the Theme from Snowwhite and the Seven Dwarfs.

"We'll have the party tomorrow," Petunia said, gaily, "you know . . . when you're . . . well, after . . . oh, YOU know," and she giggled. "But I'd better give Leda a ring, all the same."

Petunia's chief lady in waiting laid out the most beautiful gossamer nightgown of all, and the chambermaid made sure there wasn't a single pea under any of the sixteen mattresses.

At last Petunia entered the bedroom looking lovelier than any person should be allowed to look.

She slipped between the silk-soft sheets, then murmured, almost whispered to her lady in waiting. "My husband?"

"He's in the washbasin, my lady," she curtsied. "I'll fetch him."

Silver moonlight filtered through the turret window. Petunia threw off her golden gossamer gown and clutched the frog to her pearl-white breast. "I love you, frog-husband," she sang, and then she unbound her hair, to let the long braids fall free and flowing over her languid, lovely shoulders. "I love you, frog-husband," she sang, again.

Next morning, a happy smile suffused Petunia's face as the first rays of the summer sun heralded a bright, new day. She yawned sleepily, then blushed, remembering that she was a bride.

"Husband," she called, gently, as she opened her eyes . . . to see beside her . . . a frog.

She hid herself beneath the silken sheet. "Oh!" she screamed. "You LIED!"

"Croak," said the frog, with a smile. "Croak." ◀

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INQUEST IN KANSAS

(A Modern American Ballad)

CORONER — It was not a deer you saw, you say,
That beckoned beyond the corn?

FIELD HANDS — The creature she followed that fearful day
Was a thing with a single horn.

CORONER — She never mentioned she knew his kind—
A thing with a single horn—
Yet she left without casting a glance behind
At the fields where you mowed the corn?

FIELD HANDS — She had been known as a faithful wife
Yet she bounded through the corn
As though she had waited all her life
For the thing with the single horn.

CORONER — Could a mother who loved beyond compare
The children she had borne
Orphan them in charity's care
For a thing with a single horn?

FIELD HANDS — It was not love that lured her away
From the fields that were yellow with corn
To leave her children, her husband slay,
But a thing with a single horn.

CORONER — Why did you not move and prevent her escape
When you saw there was blood on the corn?

FIELD HANDS — Made helpless as scarecrows, we scarcely could gape
For fear of the thing with the horn.

CORONER — But did she intend to hit his head
When she threw her fork in the corn?
Did she know her husband was lying dead
When she followed the thing with the horn?

FIELD HANDS — We saw the thing hand her a fork
Which she brandished at us in scorn
(With a strength that she never had for work)
Then she followed the thing with the horn.

—HYACINTHE HILL

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It has been far too long since we heard from Mildred Clingerman, who returns now with a tale of an old woman with unlikely powers, a young woman too much in love, an angel who was not, and allied curious matters, all of which lead to an unusual blow-up.

MEASURE MY LOVE

by Mildred Clingerman

To this day there are people in Plumfield who choose to believe that my cousin, Althea, and I murdered Maude Gillyflower, and then deliberately set fire to the old house called "Passageway." For fifteen years I have kept my counsel and referred the more impertinent gossips to *James 1*: 26 and to Mr. Tidrow of the First Bank of Plumfield. In justice to Althea and myself I could not do less; but a full accounting must wait, I thought, till Judgment Day, since neither Althea nor I cared to end our days in the County Insane Asylum, which is where folks go who insist on explaining the inexplicable.

However, I reckoned without my host—which simply means I never dreamed there'd come a day when all the world would be living cheek-by-jowl with the inconceivable, and scarcely a voice raised to point out the madness of such behavior. Who, today, would dare question my sanity? There's another and better reason for telling the truth of what happened that night at Passageway: Somebody may come forward with information as to the whereabouts of Maude Gillyflower. I, for one, would be very grateful for even an inkling, and have instructed Mr. Tidrow, our bank President, to supply all informants with a crisp five dollar bill. Address all communications, please, to the First Bank of Plumfield. Mind you, I have no assurance that Maude would either be willing or able to administer a world-cure—she's such a cross-grained old biddy—but she does know a way out, and I mean to take it . . . if she can be found.

To begin with, Althea fell in love. Practically everything in Al-

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thea's life has begun with her falling in love. According to the latest letter I've had from her she's still doing it, and having a wonderful time. Only once, that I know of, has she failed to enjoy this tedious state of traumas, tremors, and transgressions. That was the time she came all the way from New York to Plumfield and stood in my parlor wringing her hands like a high school Lady Macbeth. (Althea is an actress, and usually a better one than that.)

"What's ailing you?" I asked her. I didn't even get up out of the rocking chair. I was holding my cat, Thomasina, and she hates being dumped suddenly.

"I'm in love," Althea said. "Dodie, you've got to help me."

"You sound like a sick cat," I said. "Now, if you were, I could take you to Maude Gillyflower—" Althea swayed, and her face turned the pale green of an inside cabbage leaf. I dumped Thomasina and got Althea to bed, not even stopping to scold about the lipstick she'd no doubt smear all over my best pillow slips. I don't believe in lovesickness. I made Althea admit she hadn't had any food for at least twenty-four hours, and little sleep for even longer. I fed her some good hot, homemade soup and gave her a draught of sleeping medicine and refused to heed her broken, tearful attempts to talk. I let her sleep next day till almost noon and then gave her a better lunch than any of those messes you buy in a New York restaurant. She had to admit that.

Afterwards, I hung a sign on the front door: Do Not Disturb. (Plumfield is used to it, and kindly allows me a few spinster peculiarities.) I pulled down the blinds in the parlor, and I listened to Althea till she finally ran down. At first as I listened I was inclined to dismiss the whole thing as just another of Althea's loop-the-loops. She has always written me voluminous letters, and here she was using some of the same words she'd written to glorify other idiocies of hers which were supposed to be love. But long before she finished I realized that this time really was different. If some of the words were the same, so what? For centuries people have been confusing themselves and each other with the same old slippery words for all varieties of "love." The difference, this time, lay in all the things Althea did not say. There was no gush; there were no extravagant declarations, no frills. The facts were brought forth as bald as an egg.

Althea was in love with a married man. A *happily* married man, with a family. A man who was not rich or particularly handsome or even very young. He liked Althea. I gathered he liked her quite a lot; and under other circumstances, perhaps, he could have loved her. Althea, I might add, is considered

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beautiful and desirable by most men, and it is to her credit that she is well-liked by most women, once they've discovered she never trespasses on private property. In this case, Althea said, love had sneaked up and sandbagged her before she could decently duck out—she'd had to finish the run of the play, but the moment it closed she'd fled to Plumfield, in hopes that I'd have handy a good homemade cure.

"I had to get away," she said. "I was scared to death I'd invite him to bed and he'd accept . . . or refuse. Dodie, think of something. I've got six weeks till we start rehearsing the new play. If I don't go back armed to the teeth with amulets and anti-love potions, I'm sunk. I managed to stagger through these last few weeks, simply because I could do that whole damn play in my sleep. Just the same, I was warned to get a good, long rest and stop looking like Whistler's Mother, or they'd replace me . . ."

Althea stood at the window, shredding the leaves of my best rose geranium and flipping cigarette ashes on the aspidistra.

"Unhand my pot plants," I said, "and sit down in that rocking chair and rock hard while I think. That's an order. You smoke too much, and it's hard to smoke when you're rocking at a good clip. Another thing. Where did you get the crazy notion that I'm handy with a witch's cauldron? Please recall, Althea, that you are very little younger than I am, and though I may not be any beauty, I'm far from resembling an old granny-witch—"

Althea didn't smile at my ruffled hen act, as I'd meant her to. She just stopped rocking and looked at me with wet tormented eyes. I couldn't stand it. I let my tongue run on, while I tried to think of a good cure for love. (Some part of me wanted to laugh—hard and sharp and ironically, like the hero used to do in the old melodramas when he was being flint-eyed and brave.)

"If," I said, "you are thinking of that tonic I sent you last spring after you had the flu, and that herb tea I sent for your friend with the gout—why, I had nothing to do with brewing the stuff. I bought it off Maude Gillyflower. I guess you don't know her. Several years ago, after old bachelor Gillyflower died—we *guess* he died, but nobody ever found his body—Maude showed up and proved to the bank's satisfaction that she was his heir. She took right up where the old man left off, growing every kind of herb in that big garden and treating all the sick animals in the township. Sometimes she mixes doses for sick humans, too, if she's in the mood."

Althea was rocking again and at least half-listening, so I kept talking.

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"When folks are over-blessed with kittens they take them to Maude to be dispatched. She's got the whole town trained to bring her any starving strays. Once, oh years ago, she heard that old Judge Murray had drowned a batch of kittens in the creek. She met him on Main Street one morning and threatened to thrash him with her umbrella if he didn't pledge himself right then never to do such a thing again . . . She's crazy about cats, you can see that—the only thing she brought to Passageway, so far as I know, was a tall, marble cat she's got set up in the garden. But she's just as foolish about any animal. Why, she even likes chickens . . . To my notion, there isn't anything sillier than a chicken. Once I took her out a couple of nice, dressed pullets for her Sunday dinner. She practically slammed the door in my face. Said she "wasn't in the habit of eating her friends". She's a vegetarian, we found out . . ."

Althea stopped rocking and began pacing again. I was at my wits' end and tired of babbling of Maude Gillyflower. Would it be possible to start a backfire, maybe? Mentally I reviewed Plumfield's eligible bachelors. There weren't many. How about young Lawyer Howard? But he was such an old woman . . . finicking little white hands, forever flicking at imaginary spots of dust and fluttering over his floral arrangements.

"Let's go see her," Althea said.

"I believe he's over at the county seat today", I said absently.

"What's the matter with you, Dodie?" Althea was staring at me with something like real interest. "I said let's go see Maude Gillyflower. Anything to keep moving. That rocking chair makes me seasick . . . Besides, do you suppose she *might* know a remedy? I've heard of a plant called 'heartsease.' What's that?"

"Pansies," I said. "And I don't think it will work. Okay, come on. But kindly pretend for the first five minutes that we've come to buy catnip for Thomasina. I don't know how Maude's going to take this love-potion routine . . . and she'll be surprised that any relative of mine could believe in such foolishness. I am, too, as a matter of fact. You never used to be so superstitious, Althea. What's happened to you?"

"I told you. I'm in love."

Well, I'd asked for it. I was so disgusted with myself I didn't have a word to say during the drive out to Passageway. Althea drove fast, which I don't like, and we raised a cloud of dust behind us on the country road, but I was glad we needn't walk, as I usually did, for it was a hot and sultry day with the odor of the late summer, dusty greenness hanging heavy in the air.

The house, Passageway, with its ten acres of plum trees and

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gardens was built on the site of an older house which burned to the ground during the Civil War. The other house had been surrounded, too, by a high wall just as the "new" one was, which made it ideal, they say, for hiding runaway slaves, before they were passed on to other stopovers on the underground railway, to be set free somewhere up North. Gillyflowers had built both the original house and the one that replaced it. Maude was the last of them, I suppose, though she may have left relatives behind her when she moved to Plumfield. Nobody knew, certainly. We didn't even know where Maude had come from, because Maude almost never answered personal questions.

Althea parked the car before the locked gate and waited quietly enough while I rang the bell. In the still, hot afternoon we could hear it clanging somewhere inside the big house. Somewhere, too, chickens clucked and sang their hot weather song, and laid over this homely sound we heard a piercing, sweet whistling as if Passageway housed a giant canary bird. It seemed a long time before a rattling of keys announced Maude's arrival. The big gate swung back and Maude's stout little figure confronted us, none too hospitably.

"Now what?" Maude said, lifting her chin at me by way of a greeting, but she was looking at Althea. Most people do, if given a choice.

"I need help," Althea said. She and Maude stood looking at each other. I wanted to pinch Althea for speaking right out that way, first thing.

"Yes, I guess you do," Maude said, and she grinned a little on one side of her face. "It's all right," she said to me. "Come on in."

She led us up the wide, gravelled path, but she seemed to hesitate at the door. "Oh, well," she said, "It's hot on the west veranda. Better come inside." I was pleased. For all my years in Plumfield and for all the plums and herbs I'd bought off her, Maude had only once invited me in—it was raining—and then I'd waited in the hall. Old bachelor Gillyflower had been even more inhospitable, conducting all business at the gate.

The parlor was cool, but so dark you could barely make out the big, bulky furniture. Maude twitched a drapery aside a little and we managed to find our way to chairs. One thing I noticed right away: Every house has a distinctive smell, but Passageway's was the queerest yet. It smelled like a waiting room in a railroad station. It smelled like hot machine oil and damp leather, wet dogs, ozone, and chicken feathers. It smelled, too, of lean, vegetarian salads—I could fairly picture gaunt meals of cottage cheese on limp lettuce leaves. The medicinal

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smell of herbs, of course, hovered over all. I was trying to make out why the room had that *transient* odor, when Maude turned around and caught me sniffing.

"Well, Dodie," she said, "we're glad that long nose is good for something." But she sounded tranquil and unoffended.

Althea, when Maude began to question her, answered as simply as a child. To my surprise, Maude didn't act the least bit shocked that we'd come to her asking for a love cure. She seemed to take it as her due and even behaved as if she were seriously considering what might be done. I couldn't understand it at all, knowing how impatient she usually was with human trials and human errors. But then I noticed she was treating Althea as gently as if Althea were a sick kitten, lost and strayed and unloved. She liked Althea! I began to feel better, myself.

"There is a plant," Maude said, "but it doesn't grow here at all. Has little pink and white flowers, star-shaped. You make a tisane out of the dried blossoms . . ." She paused. "For bad cases, though, it's always better if you chew the flowers fresh-picked . . ."

Althea laughed, just the way I'd thought of laughing—sharp and quick, without humor. "Pink and white flowers," she said. "Miss Gillyflower, I must tell you. This isn't any little pink and white love."

Maude snorted. "At this point you don't know what it is. Hush, now, while I go warm up the transformer . . ." At least, that's what I thought she said.

Maude closed the door firmly behind her when she left the room, but after a while I got up and opened it just a little and peeked into the next room, which was dark, too, but appeared to be a spacious, formal dining room. The table was big enough for a banquet. There was a soft, rustling movement in the darkest corner. I squinted, but at first I couldn't make out what it was. It was big. Bigger than I am. Then I almost shrieked aloud. Instead I slammed the door in my own face and stood there gulping.

Althea looked at me, startled. "Dodie, what—?"

"An angel?" I said stupidly. "In the dining room?"

Maude came slipping in by another door. Althea was laughing, really laughing this time. "Are you entertaining an angel unaware?" she asked Maude.

Maude glared at me. "I never entertain unaware," she said. "If you must know, I'm keeping a sick swan in the dining room, and I'll thank you to stop snooping, Dodie, or go home."

"Follow me," Maude said to Althea, but taking me by the arm and marching me along beside her. The main hall at Passageway branched at one point to lead off

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into the two, large flanking wings. Come to think of it, Passageway was built very much like a bird in flight. But we continued straight on towards the back of the house. Maude opened a door into a room filled with machinery. I couldn't make out what kind of machinery —it looked a great deal like X-ray equipment in spots, but most horridly like electric chairs in others. The floor was covered with coils of heavy cable and there was a switchboard over on one side, with a monstrous tangle of wires and tubes above it.

Maude kicked a stool in my direction. "Sit," she said. "And be quiet."

"W-what are you going to do?" Althea shrank timidly in the direction of the door, which Maude had locked.

"Do?" Maude looked up in surprise. "I thought you knew. I'm going to measure your love. How can I treat you if I don't know how bad it is?"

Althea looked at me as if seeking reassurance. I suppose my smile was ghastly. "She's going to measure your love," I squeaked.

Althea looked faint, but I saw her face tighten and smooth out again as it does before she goes on stage. She became all-actress. Her voice was warm and interested. "Of course. Tell me, Miss Gillyflower, do you do this often? It looks fascinating—"

But Althea's act wasn't good enough. Maude dropped what she was doing and turned suddenly to stare at us. "Do you mean to tell me you two just *blundered* here?"

Althea and I stared blankly back at her and then nodded in unison.

It was Maude's turn to laugh. I thought she'd never stop. I didn't like the sound of it. And when she could talk, she still sounded hysterical—dangerously so. "And wouldn't *you* have been surprised," Maude said. "Such a pretty meadow . . . pink and white flowers . . . and nothing to do but browse with the rest of them. Because I meant to send you there, if you had it bad . . . and maybe you wouldn't have come back, or wanted to. Lots don't. Oh, but the surprise of it all!" She started to laugh again. I couldn't stand it any longer.

"Shut up," I said. "Be so good as to let us out of this Rube Goldberg nightmare before I scream my head off. I don't understand all this nonsense, but I don't intend to stop here long enough to find out what—"

"Scream and bedamned, Dodie," Maude said. "Nobody'll hear you. You know that. And I can't let you go . . . yet. I've got to think what to do about this mix-up. Come on over to the kitchen with me and we'll have some tea. You must give me time to consider—"

My first thought on entering

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Passageway's kitchen was: this is one of the old-fashioned woman-killing kind. With Maude looking grim and purposeful now, I wished I hadn't thought it. When she set the steaming tea before us I couldn't help sniffing it to see if it contained some strange exotic poison.

"Don't be a fool, Dodie," Maude said. "I've never killed a creature yet, on purpose."

I relaxed a little and drank my tea. Both Maude and Althea seemed lost in calculating thoughts from the expression on their faces. After I'd looked over that kitchen for a while, maybe my face looked the same way. Over on a table by the stove were stacked dozens of trays. Beside them, laid out in sectioned boxes, I saw heaps of silverware, just like the arrangement in cafeterias. There were two glass-fronted china cupboards full of the oddest-shaped dinnerware I've ever seen. Contrary to the cottage cheese impression I'd received in the parlor, the kitchen struck me now as much used. One had the feeling that all those large, damp tea towels hung up to dry near the stove had recently wiped enough china for a Ladies' Aid supper. On the wide window ledge two yellow cats slept in the loving and comfortable embrace that humans envy. The sight of them shoved a thought to the front of my head that I realized had been trying for several minutes to arouse my attention. *Maude had said: I've never killed a creature yet, on purpose.*

What about all those kittens and aged dogs she'd been dispatching for years? It's not a job I'd care for. It's one of those tasks you reluctantly concede are necessary, but you try not to think about it often. I could never get it through my head that those merciful ones who put animals out of their misery love them more than I.

"You'll have to stay here tonight," Maude said suddenly. "If I let you leave now, you'll go back to town and decide it's your duty to raise some kind of hue and cry." I started to protest. "All right, Dodie, maybe you wouldn't, but I can't risk it. Not at the moment. You know too much and too little. I can't chance any interruptions this evening . . . By tomorrow you'll know enough to keep your mouths shut, and I'll be in the clear. The next quota isn't due for two weeks. That will give me time to make other arrangements. It's a nuisance, but it was about time to move on, anyway. The equipment here is old and outmoded, and extensive remodelling would cause talk in a place like Plumfield. I've said for years we ought to locate the clinics in cities. With modern, fast trucking now, there's no need to be stuck out on the herb farms, surrounded by nosy, country neighbors." She looked pointedly at me.

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"I don't like your tone," I said, "And if you mean to explain this mishmash, start at the beginning. But first, tell me this: What have you done with all the kittens, all these years?"

"Dispatched them." Maude grinned. "On the regular run. There aren't enough cats on earth to satisfy the demand. They're the favorite pets of several worlds. Trouble is, they won't breed some places . . . too contented." She turned to Althea. "It may surprise you to learn that there are places where sex is about as necessary as teats on a boar hog."

Althea reddened; I was so taken-up with the crazy things Maude was implying I wondered how Althea could sit there blushing at the words Maude used.

I slapped my hand flat on the kitchen table. "Maude, you're either a bold-faced liar or a fool. I suppose I have to suffer fools, but since I'm in some doubt as to which you are, unlock that door and let us out of here. I decline to listen any longer to these lies—"

At that moment I heard the tapping at the kitchen door. Maude got up and unlocked it. She opened the door part-way, and started whistling. It was a low, broken whistling, and something answered back. I turned full around in my chair, prepared, I thought, for anything. But I wasn't, at all. When the angel walked into the room, I fainted.

Althea was bending over me then. I was stretched out on the kitchen floor, with my skirt hiked up to my thighs. I kept trying to pull my skirt down and Althea kept pressing me back. This seemed to go on for a long time. Finally I said sternly, "This is a very silly dream. Don't you think it's about time the scene shifted?" Althea let me up then, but the scene didn't shift. Maude and the angel were gone, and the kitchen door stood open. Otherwise, everything looked the same.

"Dodie, are you all right?" Althea asked.

"Oh, certainly," I said. I must have sounded bitter, because Althea laughed. Maude came in with a bottle of green medicine. She poured some in a teaspoon and made me take it.

"You'd better lie down a while," she said. "There's a bed across the hall."

I balked. "I ought to tell you first, just in case I get violent, that I am having hallucinations. I just saw an angel."

"Don't be tiresome, Dodie," Maude said. "You saw one of my patients—a kind of swan-man. Come on, and I'll explain."

I lay rather limply in the bed while Maude explained. Althea had started pacing again. There was occasional illness throughout the universe, Maude said. All creatures, everywhere, are subject to mental or physical ills, some-

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times both: for instance, humans, who are among the most sorely beset. A kind providence, however, had provided a cure for every ailment. Unfortunately, the vegetable cures of one planet did not always match its inhabitants needs. It was often necessary to import medicines from other worlds, and a brisk trade in pharmacopoeia had been set up centuries ago. Less frequently it was necessary for patients to betake themselves to the source of the supply, since some plants lost their efficacy or deteriorated in transport. Earth, Maude said, was a good garden planet, providing many herbs that were not to be found elsewhere. Maude's opinion of Earth's value, otherwise, was very low. She pointed out proudly that she was not a native. She had come here, with other trained physicians, a long time ago to set up secret clinics all over the world for their peoples, not all of whom, she hastened to add, were fashioned like man. After treatment, patients were returned to their own planets, well and whole.

"How?" I interrupted.

Maude smiled tightly. "I have no intention of telling you. Not that I think you'd be able to use the information . . . not for a couple of centuries yet. You people amuse me, when you're not disgusting me. So vainglorious, so ignorant, so savage. Now and then we treat a few of you—if you're smart enough to find us. Those who are far enough in advance of the pack to scent us out. Those we send away, sometimes—they don't have to be ill—if they show signs of real intelligence, and if they want to go. We send them to school, you might say. Someday you'll need leaders. When you're ready for them, we'll send them back. Now, you must excuse me," Maude said. "I have to dispatch some convalescents who *are* anxious to get back home."

Althea stopped pacing. "What about me? You said you'd treat me . . . Please, I still want you to."

Maude grimaced. "You were a mistake," she said. "I must be getting soft in the head. But I thought it was your misery that made your mind so dim . . ." She looked at Althea speculatively and her voice turned gentle. "But you do have a kind of infant appeal . . . All right. Later." Maude left us, locking us in.

It seemed hours before she returned, bearing a tray of fairly palatable food, all vegetables. I was famished. Some of the food we didn't recognize, but we ate it anyway. It was surprisingly satisfying.

"Your guests gone?" I asked her.

"All gone. You can leave now, if you like, or wait till morning."

"Not yet." Althea said. "You promised to help me."

Maude sighed as if she were tired and exasperated. "You're a

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very silly child, of a very silly people. How stupidly you misuse love! Very well, then, come on."

She led us again to the room full of machinery. Althea sat in one of the electric chairs, while Maude taped the wires behind her ears and at her wrists.

"Now," Maude said. "Let yourself go and sink as deeply into your trouble as possible. Don't put up any barriers to your pain. When you think you've hit bottom, press this switch."

Althea nodded. I looked away. I didn't care to see Althea's face if it got any more miserable-looking. I felt indignant with Maude. Didn't she know that humankind needed privacy at such times?

Suddenly the room was filled with a blinding, blue light. Something sputtered and flashed redly. Smoke drifted before me like a trailing scarf.

"Get out," Maude was saying quietly. "The house is on fire."

I opened the door and blundered into the hall. Behind me came Maude, supporting Althea, who was looking like a drunken, triumphant goddess, wreathed in smiles. I could hear fire roaring now in the machinery room, and popping sounds as if bottles were breaking. The hall seemed endless, but at last we emerged safely into the garden.

". . . call the fire department?" I screamed at Maude. By that time one entire wing was blazing.

"No," she said. "Let it burn. It's just as well . . ."

"The cats?" I persisted.

"Gone. I sent them away. All but this one." She picked up the marble cat as if it weighed nothing. "I told you I'd be leaving after tonight."

It was a glorious fire, but very hot. We backed away till we reached the orchard. I looked at Althea, who wasn't saying a word —just standing there in the firelight, grinning.

"Well, I must say! The electric chair cure certainly worked—" Althea whirled on me, her mouth and eyes wide. Maude stared at me, too, frowning.

"Worked? Dodie, you idiot! Don't you understand? She was simply *measuring* my love! It was I who set fire to the house . . . I knew I was miserably in love, but I never dreamed it was this bad. Isn't it *wonderful*? Imagine, love so powerful, so *blazing*—"

"Nonsense!" Maude bellowed. "Defective wiring! I told you—"

"I don't believe you," Althea laughed and raised her arms high and joyfully. "I'll bet nobody ever loved as I love! Why don't you admit it? 'Let yourself go', you said, and when I did I almost *crisped* at the thought of him! Then came the pain and despair . . . of course, I did it!"

"Your despair is very touching," Maude said dryly. "Is this your usual way of expressing it?"

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Althea stopped her flowers-in-spring dance so quickly it was as if Maude's words had switched off a mechanical doll. She looked at Maude and me in bewilderment. "It does seem rather odd," she said. "But somehow that's just the way I feel. The idea that I could love so fervently . . ."

"I think," Maude said, "that you simply like pyrotechnics. Besides, I doctored your food with dried pink and white flowers. When *this* Roman candle stops fizzing, you'll be just as eager to light another one. Well, good scorching, ladies, and good night." Maude shouldered the marble cat and walked off into the dark.

Althea glared after her. "I think you're hateful!" she called.

Maude stopped and turned to look back at us. "Damned babies, playing with fire . . ." she began, and then stood silently for a long time as if reluctant to leave us. "Althea?" Maude's voice sounded strangely soft and warm. "You could learn . . . Come with me, and I'll send you away. You could come, too, Dodie," she said with an unflattering lack of urgency. "Though I think you'll survive your little trouble, too . . ."

I winced, but I managed to say "no, thank you" graciously enough. Althea's euphoria was still apparent. She fairly sang out her refusal. Maude left then, without another word.

Afterwards, Althea made one or two attempts to pry out of me the details of the "little trouble" Maude mentioned. I don't know how Maude knew it, since I'd only just discovered it for myself and was still probing at the newness and soreness as one does a tooth that has just erupted. The truth is, I was young enough and foolish enough to be somewhat hopeful then, but that was fifteen years ago. I wonder if Maude doctored my food, too? If so, it didn't work for me. I'll bet Maude would be surprised if she measured my love, my little trouble . . . Though I'd try not to burn the house down, because it isn't just a love cure I want from Maude. She spoke of leaders being trained. Where are they?

Hope dies hard—hope for yourself and for the world you love. Mr. Tidrow was married only last week to a very pleasant woman. My reaction to this event frightened me. Of late, so many things frighten me. You're probably thinking it's The Bomb I'm afraid of. Certainly, that's part of it—after all, I'm still of fairly sound mind, but there are other things . . .

Like the boy two houses down the street who mashes kittens with an old sadiron; and the clerk at the supermarket who slashed the tires on all the cars belonging to Jews. They frighten me. And I'm afraid of you, who whispered the

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latest bogey word and set the town against the new teacher . . . and me, who sneered at Lawyer Howard's mincing walk and fluttering hands . . . and wished hard for two whole days that a pleasant woman would die. People in my grandparents' time were behaving much the same way. Sure, I'm scared. And ashamed. If I could crawl into a hole, I thought, and pull the hole in after me . . . I remembered Maude.

Maude wrote to Mr. Tidrow two days after the fire, instructing him to sell the acreage of Passageway and to give the money to charity. She was in Iowa then, but preparing to move on. She didn't say where.

She spoke of locating in some big city, but even in a crowded city, Maude would find space for the marble cat.

Has anybody seen a marble cat lately? Maybe, if we can find Maude, some of you would like to come along. . ?

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Always eager to present fresh talent to the public, we advance here the work of a young writer of promise who is bound—we predict—to make his mark upon the world. As a scientific commentator he lacks the richness of Paracelsus and the pragmatic application of Lydia E. Pinkham, but he does well enough, in his naïf and bumbling way, for all that. Our indulgent readers will, in addressing themselves to his remarks on combustion and the history of chymistry, make allowances for his youth, his inexperience, and his innocent enthusiasm . . . Has anybody got a match?

SLOW BURN

by Isaac Asimov

FOR MANY YEARS NOW I HAVE BEEN AN INVETERATE admirer of Sir Isaac Newton. One can, after all, make out a good case for his having been the greatest scientist who ever lived.

What's more, it doesn't displease me one little bit that Newton's first name is Isaac. To be sure, I wasn't named for him, but for my grandfather. Yet the principle remains; we have something in common. And to top it off, the Boston suburb in which I live is named Newton and how do you like that?

So you see, I have lots of reasons for being an Isaac Newton fan and it therefore pains me to admit there are flaws in the shining picture he presents. In physics and astronomy, he was a transcendent genius. In mathematics, he was a ground-breaking prodigy. Yet in chemistry, he was nothing but a bumbler. He wasted his time in a vain and useless ef-

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fort to manufacture gold, scouring Europe for recipes, trying each one and forever being disappointed.

This is a dramatic way of showing that Newton stood at a midway point in the history of the physical sciences. In the 1680's when he announced his laws of motion and his theory of gravitation, the birth of modern physics (thanks to Galileo) was just one century in the past and the birth of modern chemistry (thanks to Lavoisier) was just one century in the future.

Now the story of the birth of physics has been told and told again. We all know (or should) about Galileo's experiments with falling bodies which, at one stroke, destroyed Aristotelian physics and established the modern form of the science. In popular mythology, this is concentrated into a single experiment, the dropping of a heavy and light ball from the top of the Leaning Tower of Pisa and watching them hit the ground simultaneously. (Actually, it is quite certain that Galileo never performed this experiment.)

On the other hand, the birth of chemistry is graced by no such key experiment. There is no chemical equivalent of dropping weights off the Leaning Tower of Pisa; no single, classic feat to go ringing down the corridors of time as the smasher of the old and the beginner of the new. At least, I don't find one in the books I've read on the subject; not one that is pointed at as *the* experiment.

Except that I think I've found one. I think I can make a case for the existence of a single, simple experiment that smashed the old chemistry and started the new chemistry. It was every bit as dramatic and conclusive (if not quite as spectacular) as the Leaning Tower of Pisa experiment, except that:

1) The crucial chemical experiment really happened and is not a myth, and

2) It involved a mad scientist and should therefore strike a nostalgic chord in the hearts of all true science-fiction fans.

With your permission then, oh, Gentle Readers (or, if necessary, without) I shall tell the story of the birth of Modern Chemistry, as I see it.

In the time of Newton, chemical theory was still based, in large part, on what the Greek philosophers had worked out two thousand years earlier. The "four elements" (that is, the fundamental substances out of which the Universe was made) were earth, water, air and fire.

The Greek philosophers felt that actual bodies were made up of the four elements in particular proportions. One could well imagine, then,

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that the elements in one body could be separated and then recombined in different proportions to form a second body of a different sort. In this way, one could change one metal into another (if one could but discover the correct procedure) and, in particular, one could change lead into gold.

For about 1500 years, alchemists tried to find out the proper recipe for such "transmutation." The Arabs, in the process, worked out the theory that there were two special principles involved in the different solid bodies with which they worked. There was the metallic principle, mercury, and the combustible principle, sulfur.

This didn't help them make gold and by Newton's time, chemistry seemed badly in need of some new ideas. What's more, any new ideas that did come along ought to deal with combustion. Coal was beginning to come into use as a new fuel. Men were beginning to play with the steam produced by the heat of burning fuel. In general, the matter of combustion was in the air and as exciting in 1700 as electricity was to be in 1800, radioactivity in 1900 and rocketry in 1950.

Onto the scene then, steps a German physician named Georg Ernest Stahl. While still in his twenties he was appointed court physician to the Duke of Weimar. In later life he was to become physician to still higher royalty, King Frederick William I of Prussia. His lectures on medicine at the University of Halle were famous and well-attended.

Well, in 1700, this man advanced a theory of combustion that made more sense than anything previously suggested. He drew heavily on alchemical notions and, in particular, on the combustible principle, sulfur. He gave this principle a new name and described its behavior in greater detail.

The principle, he called "phlogiston," from a Greek word meaning "to set on fire," for he held that all inflammable objects contained phlogiston and it was only the phlogiston content that made it possible for them to burn.

During the process of combustion, said Stahl, the burning material lost its content of phlogiston, which poured out into and was received by the air. What was left after combustion was completely lacking in phlogiston and could burn no more. Wood and coal, for instance, were rich in phlogiston, but the ash they left behind contained none.

Stahl's greatest contribution to chemical thinking was his suggestion that the process of rusting metals was similar in principle to that of the burning of wood. A metal, such as iron, was rich in phlogiston. As it corroded it lost phlogiston to the air and when all the phlogiston was gone, only rust was left behind.

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The basic difference, then, between the burning of wood and the rusting of iron was no more than a matter of speed. Wood lost phlogiston so rapidly that the velocity of its passing made it visible as flame. Iron lost phlogiston so slowly that its passage was imperceptible. Burning, in Stahl's view, then, was a fast rusting; while rusting was a slow burn.

In this, Stahl was quite correct but he gets little credit for it. About the first thing chemistry students are taught to do is to laugh at the phlogiston theory so that Stahl is either forgotten or condemned and I consider that unfair.

As a matter of fact, the phlogiston theory explained quite a few things that were not explained before, most notably the matter of metallurgy. For instance, it had been known for thousands of years that if metal ore were heated strongly, in contact with burning wood or charcoal, the free metal could be obtained. As for *why* this happened no one had a good answer.

Until Stahl, that is. According to the phlogiston theory, it was easy to see that a metal ore was a kind of naturally-occurring rust that was completely free of phlogiston and therefore showed no metallic properties. If heated in the presence of phlogiston-rich charcoal, phlogiston passed from the charcoal to the ore. As the ore gained phlogiston, it turned into metal. As the charcoal lost phlogiston it turned into ash.

Isn't that neat?

Unfortunately, there was one great flaw in the theory. When a metal rusted, it gained weight! One pound of iron produced about one and a half pounds of iron rust. If the conversion were the result of the loss of phlogiston and not the gaining of anything, where did the extra weight come from?

A few chemists worried about this and tried to explain that phlogiston had negative weight! Instead of phlogiston being pulled down by gravity, it was pushed up by levity. (You may take that as a pun, if you choose, but "levity" was the actual term used.) Thus, a pound of iron could be considered as containing minus half a pound of phlogiston and when the phlogiston left, the resulting rust would weigh one and a half pounds.

This notion went over like a lead balloon. For one thing, no example of levity was found anywhere in nature outside of phlogiston, and for another, when wood burned it *lost* weight. The ash it left behind was much lighter than the original wood. If the wood had lost phlogiston and if phlogiston exerted a force of levity, why wasn't the ash heavier than the wood, as rust is heavier than iron?

There was no answer to this, and the average chemist of the day simply

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shrugged. There was, after all, no tradition of exact measurement in chemistry. For thousands of years everyone had worked the chemical industries as art-forms rather than as sciences. The alchemists had involved themselves in purely descriptive observations. They had noted the formation of precipitates, the emission of vapors, the changes of colors—but such things as weight and volume were irrelevant.

For two generations, matters continued thus and then, in the 1770's, a number of momentous developments took place. For one thing, chemists began to concern themselves with air.

To the ancient Greeks air was an element, a single substance. However, the Scottish chemist, Joseph Black, burned a candle in a closed container of air, as the 1770's opened, and found that the candle eventually went out. When it did, there was still plenty of air in the container, so *why* did it go out?

He was busy with other matters, so he passed the problem on to a student of his named Daniel Rutherford. (Rutherford, by the way, was the uncle of the poet and novelist, Sir Walter Scott.)

In 1772, Rutherford repeated Black's experiments and went further. New candles set on fire and placed in the air remaining, promptly went out themselves. Mice, placed in such air, died.

Rutherford analyzed these observations in terms of the phlogiston theory. When a candle burned in an enclosed volume of air, it gave up phlogiston to the air but, apparently, any given volume of air could only hold so much phlogiston and no more. When it was filled with phlogiston, the candle went out and nothing further would burn in that air. A living creature which, in the process of breathing, constantly gave up phlogiston (there had been speculations dating back to Roman times that respiration was analogous to combustion) could not do so in this phlogiston-filled air, and died. Rutherford called this asphyxiating gas, "phlogisticated air."

The scene now shifts southward to England where a Unitarian minister, Joseph Priestley, had become interested in science after he met the American scientist and statesman, Benjamin Franklin, in 1766.

Priestley's great discovery came from experiments with mercury in 1774. He began by heating mercury with sunlight concentrated through a large magnifying glass. The heat caused the gleaming surface of the mercury to be coated with a reddish powder. Priestley skimmed off the powder and heated it to a still higher temperature. The powder evaporated, forming two different gases. One of these was mercury vapor, for it condensed into droplets of mercury in the cool upper regions of the vessel. The other remained an invisible vapor.

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How did Priestley know it was there? Well, it had peculiar properties that were not like those of ordinary air. A smoldering splint of wood thrust into the container in which the red powder from mercury was being heated burst into bright flame. Priestley collected the vapors and found a candle would burn in it with unearthly brightness; he found that mice placed in the vapor would jump about actively; he even breathed some himself and reported it made him feel very "light and easy."

Priestley interpreted all this according to the phlogiston theory. When mercury was heated it lost some of its phlogiston to air and became a red powder which lacked phlogiston and could be considered a kind of mercury-rust. If he heated this mercury-rust strongly it absorbed phlogiston from the air and became mercury again. Meanwhile, the air in the neighborhood was bled of its phlogiston and became "dephlogisticated air." Naturally, such dephlogisticated air was unusually thirsty for phlogiston. It sucked phlogiston rapidly out of a smoldering splint and the velocity of the reaction was visible as a burst of flame. For similar reasons, candles burnt more brightly and mice ran about more actively in dephlogisticated air than in ordinary air.

The Priestley and Rutherford experiments, taken together, seemed to show that air was a single material substance, which could be altered in properties by a variation in its content of the imponderable fluid, phlogiston.

Ordinary air contains some phlogiston but is not saturated with it. It can gain phlogiston when something burns in it; or it can lose phlogiston when a rust heated in it becomes a metal. When it gains all the phlogiston it can hold, it will no longer support combustion or life and it is then Rutherford's gas. If it loses all the phlogiston it has, it will support combustion with great eagerness and life with great ease and will then be Priestley's gas.

Now we shift still further south. In Paris, the brilliant young chemist, Lavoisier, is working hard under the stress of an idea—that measurement is as important to chemistry as Galileo showed it to be to physics. Qualitative observations are insufficient; one must be quantitative.

As an example—When water, even the purest, was slowly boiled away in a glass vessel, some sediment was always left behind. Alchemists had often done this and they had pointed to the sediment as an example of the manner in which the element, water, had been converted to the element, earth. (From this they deduced that transmutation was possible and that lead could be turned to gold.)

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About 1770, Lavoisier decided to repeat the experiment, but quantitatively. He began by accurately weighing a clean flask and adding an accurate weight of water. He then boiled the water under conditions so designed that the rising water vapor was cooled, condensed back to water and forced to drip again into the still-boiling contents of the flask. He continued this for 101 days, thus giving the water plenty of time to turn into earth. He then stopped and let all the water cool down.

Sure enough, as the water cooled, the sediment formed. Lavoisier poured out the water, filtered off the sediment and weighed each separately. The weight of the water had not changed at all. He then weighed the flask. The flask had lost weight and the loss in weight was just equal to the weight of the sediment. Water had not changed to earth; it had simply dissolved some of the material of the flask.

Thus he showed that one conclusion drawn from a particular experiment could be shifted to another and much more plausible conclusion by simply becoming quantitative.

In a later experiment, Lavoisier put some tin in a vessel which he then closed. He next weighed the whole business accurately. Then he heated the vessel.

A white rust formed on the tin. It was known that such a rust was invariably heavier than the original metal, yet when Lavoisier weighed the whole set up, he found the total weight had not changed at all. If the rust were heavier than the tin, then that gain in weight must have been countered by an equal loss in weight elsewhere in the vessel. If the loss in weight were in the air content then a partial vacuum should now exist in the vessel. Sure enough, when Lavoisier opened the vessel, air rushed in and then the system increased in weight. The increase was equal to the extra weight of the rust.

Lavoisier therefore suggested the following: Combustion (or rust-formation) was caused not by the loss of phlogiston but by the combination of the fuel or metal with air. Phlogiston had nothing to do with it. Phlogiston did not exist.

The weak point in this new suggestion, just at first, lay in the fact that not all the air was involved in this. Lavoisier found that when a candle burned, it used up only about one-fifth of the air. It would burn no longer in the remaining four-fifths.

Light dawned when Priestley visited France and had a conversation with Lavoisier. Of course! Lavoisier rushed back to his work. If phlogiston did not exist, then air could not change its properties with gain or loss of phlogiston. If two kinds of air seemed to exist with different properties, then it was because air contained two different substances.

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The one-fifth of the air which a burning candle used up was Priestley's dephlogisticated air, which Lavoisier now called "oxygen" from Greek words meaning "sourness-producer." (Lavoisier thought oxygen was a necessary component of acids. It isn't, but the name will never be changed now.) As for the remaining four-fifths of the air, that portion in which candles would not burn and mice would not live, that was Rutherford's phlogisticated air, and Lavoisier called it "azote" from Greek words meaning "no life." Nowadays, we call it "nitrogen."

Air, according to Lavoisier, then, was one-fifth oxygen and four-fifths nitrogen. Combustion and rusting were brought about by the combination of materials with oxygen only. Some combinations (or "oxides"), like carbon dioxide, were vapors and left the scene of combustion altogether, which was why coal, wood and candles all lost weight drastically after burning. Other oxides were solids and remained on the spot, which was why rust was heavier than metal,—heavier by the added oxygen.

In order for a new theory to displace an old, comfortable one, the new theory has to be *clearly* better, and the oxygen-theory was not, just at first. To most chemists, oxygen just seemed phlogiston in reverse. Instead of wood losing phlogiston in combustion, it gained oxygen. Instead of iron ore gaining phlogiston in iron smelting, it lost oxygen.

Lavoisier could only have carried conviction if he could prove that the matter of weight was crucial, for the oxygen theory explained the weight changes in combustion and rusting, while the phlogiston theory did not and could not.

Lavoisier tried to emphasize the importance of weight and to make it central to chemistry by maintaining that there was no change in total weight during the course of any chemical reaction in a *closed* system, where vapors were not allowed to escape and outside air could not be added. This is the "Law of Conservation of Mass." Another way of putting it is that matter can neither be created nor destroyed and if that is true then the phlogiston theory is fallacious, for in it the added weight of the rust appears out of nowhere and matter must therefore be created.

Unfortunately, Lavoisier could not make the law of conservation of mass hard and fast at first. There was a flaw. Lavoisier tried to measure the amount of oxygen a human being absorbed in breathing and to compare it with the carbon dioxide he exhaled. When he did that, it always turned out that some of the oxygen had disappeared. The exhaled carbon dioxide never accounted for all the oxygen taken in. If the law of conservation of mass didn't hold, there was no handy stick with which to kill phlogiston.

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Now let's go back to England and to our mad scientist, Henry Cavendish.

Cavendish, you see, was pathologically shy and unbelievably absent minded. It was only with difficulty he could speak to one man; and it was virtually impossible to speak to more than one. Although he regularly attended dinner at the Royal Society, dressed in snuffy, old-fashioned clothes, he ate in dead silence with his eyes on his plate.

He was a woman-hater (or, perhaps, woman-fearer) to the point where he could not bear to look at one. He communicated with his female servants by notes and any who accidentally crossed his path in his house was fired on the spot. He built a separate entrance to his house so he could come and leave alone. In the end, he even insisted on dying alone.

He came of a noble family and at the age of 40 inherited a fortune, but paid no particular attention to it. Money literally meant nothing to him, and neither did fame. Many of his important discoveries he never bothered publishing, and it is only by going through the papers he left behind that we know of them.

Some discoveries, however, he did publish. In 1766, for instance, he discovered an inflammable gas produced by the action of acids on metals. This had been done before but Cavendish was the first to study the gas systematically and so he gets credit for its discovery.

One thing that Cavendish noted about the gas was that it was exceedingly light; far lighter than air; lighter than any material object then known (or since discovered). With his mind on the "levity" that some had suggested as one of the properties of phlogiston, Cavendish began to wonder whether he had stumbled on something that was mostly, or even entirely, phlogiston. Perhaps he had phlogiston itself.

After all, as the gas left the metal through the action of acids, the metal formed a rust with phenomenal rapidity. Furthermore, the gas was highly inflammable; indeed, explosively so; and surely that was to be expected of phlogiston.

When in the decade that followed, Rutherford isolated his phlogisticated air and Priestley his dephlogisticated air, it occurred to Cavendish that he could perform a crucial experiment.

He could add his phlogiston to a sample of dephlogisticated air and convert it first into ordinary air and then into phlogisticated air. If he did that it could be ample proof that his inflammable gas was indeed phlogiston and, moreover, it would be a general proof of the truth of the phlogiston theory.

So, in 1781, Cavendish performed *the* crucial experiment in chemis-

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try. It was simplicity itself. He merely set acid to working on metal so that a jet of his phlogiston could be forced out of a glass tube. This jet of phlogiston could be lit by a spark and allowed to burn inside a vessel full of air. That was all there was to it.

But when he did it, he found to his surprise that he had not formed phlogisticated air at all. Instead the inner walls of the vessel were bedewed with drops of a liquid that looked like water, tasted like water, felt like water, had all the chemical properties of water and, egad, sir, *was* water.

Cavendish hadn't proved the phlogiston theory at all. In fact, as Lavoisier saw at once, Cavendish's experiment had once and for all killed phlogiston.

As soon as Lavoisier heard of Cavendish's work, he jumped upon it with loud cries of delight. He repeated the experiment with improvements and named Cavendish's gas, "hydrogen" from Greek words meaning "water-producer," a name it keeps to this day.

Here's what this one simple experiment of Cavendish's did:

1) It proved water to be an oxide; the oxide of hydrogen. This was the last, final blow to the "four elements" theory of the Greeks, for water was not a basic substance after all.

2) It wiped out the notion that air was a single substance varying in properties according to its phlogiston content. If that were so, then hydrogen plus oxygen would yield nitrogen (as Cavendish had, in truth, expected it would—using the 18th Century terminology of phlogisticated air, dephlogisticated air and so on). But if air were not a single substance then the only way of accounting for the experiments of the 1770's was to assume it a mixture of two substances.

3) Lavoisier realized that the foodstuffs that underwent combustion in the body contained both carbon *and* hydrogen. In the light of Cavendish's experiment then, it was not surprising that the carbon dioxide produced by the body was less than sufficient to account for the oxygen absorbed. Some of the oxygen was used up in combining with hydrogen to form water and expired breath was rich in water as well as carbon dioxide. The obvious flaw in the law of conservation of mass was removed. The importance of quantitative measurement in chemistry was thus established and has never since been doubted.

In short, then, all of Modern Chemistry traces back, clean and true as an arrow, to Cavendish's burning jet of hydrogen.

There is an ironic postscript to the story, though. Lavoisier had one

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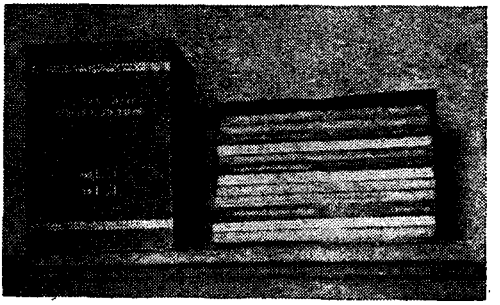
flaw in an otherwise admirable character. He had a tendency to grab for credit that did not belong to him. In advancing his theory of combustion, for instance, he never mentioned Priestley's experiments and never indicated that he had discussed them with Priestley. In fact, he tried to give the impression that he, himself, was the discoverer of oxygen. In the same way, when he repeated Cavendish's experiment of burning hydrogen, he tried to give the impression, without quite saying so, that the experiment was original with him.

Lavoisier didn't get away with these little tricks and posterity has forgiven him his vanity, for what he *did* do (including a good deal of material I haven't mentioned in this article) was quite enough for a hundred ordinary chemists.

However, it is quite likely that neither Priestley nor Cavendish felt particularly kindly toward Lavoisier as a result. At least, neither man would accept Lavoisier's new chemistry. Both men refused to abandon phlogiston, and remained stubborn devotees of the old chemistry to the end of their lives.

Which once again proves, I suppose, that scientists are human. Like the metals they work with, they can be subjected to the effects of a slow burn.



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BOOKS

A CENTURY OF SCIENCE FICTION, Damon Knight, Simon & Schuster, $4.95

NEW STORIES FROM THE TWILIGHT ZONE, Rod Serling, Bantam Books, 35¢

WORLDS OF WHEN, Groff Conklin, Pyramid Books, 40¢

THE SF WOODS, IT IS TRUE, ARE no longer as full of anthologies as they once were, and some of the gaps represent deadwood which will never be missed. To say that Damon Knight's new volume will fill any of these gaps would be absurd: as well speak of an oak filling the space left by a sumac. We have lost several pennies (some of them bad); we have been given a shiny gold-piece.

Damon Knight is best known for his short stories (a collection of them, FAR OUT, appeared late last year, also under the S & S imprint). His two novels, HELL'S PAVEMENT and THE PEOPLE MAKER, have brought him less acclaim—deservedly so. Readers of this magazine will remember him as Alfred Bester's predecessor as Books Editor. This was not Mr. Knight's first venture into literary criticism, however; a volume of his earlier studies on this aspect of Science Fiction, IN SEARCH OF WONDER, is kept next to the gold and ivory in many a treasure chest; and failed to receive even a tithe of the attention devoted to Kingsley Amis's subsequent NEW MAPS OF HELL only because (a) Damon Knight was not already famous as an angry young man (we do not feel the phrase rates capitals), and (b) his book was brought out by a very small house (Avon), unable to afford advertising.

It is doubtful if Simon and Schuster would bring out IN SEARCH OF WONDER if it were to be written today—in fact, what are we saying? "Doubtful", *Hell!* KNIGHT ON SCIENCE FICTION (as we believe its title goes) is being readied for publication, and who is bringing it out? Simon and et cetera? Not on your tintype. Spunky fannish little Avon, that is who.

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Well, so much for the gripes. Now for the main bout. In this corner, wearing purple tights, and weighing eighty-five pounds soaking wet, is DAMON KNIGHT, with twenty-six selections from Science Fiction written over the past hundred and three years (the Knight century even gives you more years for your money), plus an erudite and excellent introduction, and notes accompanying each piece which only occasionally tend towards the kittenish (a tendency which afflicts editors who compile —as distinct from editors who comment) including, we fear, Your Seruant to Command. "No hawker e'er cries, 'Stinking fish for sale!'" says an old proverb. Readers will thus understand the difference between Knight (and Davidson) as editors of compilations and Knight (or Davidson) as reviewers of books. And to understand is to forgive, as an old and untrue saying has it.

Says Knight in his Introduction: "The organizing principle of this field since about 1860 has been the idea of science: of knowledge systematically obtained and rationally applied. As we contrast older stories with newer ones in this book, you'll be able to see how that idea slowly changed the imaginative story into something that had never existed in the world before." You will, indeed. You will also enjoy what he calls "the pleasure of watching consequences flow logically out of a boldly imaginative premise."

Among the writers included are Weinbaum, Bierce, Asimov, Aldiss, Wells, Bester, Farmer, Heinlein, Clarke, O'Brien, Pangborn, Stapledon, Anderson. Some of them we had read before. Outstanding among those new to us were a first-rate Philip José Farmer bit called *Sail On! Sail On!* (unaccountably placed by Mr. Knight under "Time Travel" when it is patently a parallel universe story), a delightful conceit of a *different* First Voyage of Columbus; and something called *Another World*—another of Damon Knight's translations from the French—by the semi-unpronounceable J.-H. Rosny Aîné. This last is listed under "Supermen," although "Mutant" would seem closer. Nothing so commonplace as psi powers here—the protagonist literally sees things which the rest of us do not even know exist. And what "things," too! The other sections are "Robots," "Space," "Other Worlds and People," (including a perpetual favorite of ours, H. G. Wells's *The Crystal Egg*), "Aliens Among Us," and "Marvellous Inventions." Among the latter is a serious and unfortunately rather jerky (in the non-slang sense) piece by Mark Twain.

But the best of all remains the selection from H. G. Wells's *The Time Traveller.* We must quote: *As I put on pace,* [the Time Trav-

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eller describes his venture into the future] *night followed day like the flapping of a black wing . . . I saw the sun hopping swiftly across the sky, leaping it every minute, and every minute marking a day . . . I saw the moon spinning swiftly through her quarters from new to full, and had a faint glimpse of the circling stars. Presently . . . the palpitation of night and day merged into one continuous greyness . . . the jerking sun became a streak of fire . . . I saw trees growing and changing like puffs of vapor, now brown, now green; they grew, spread, shivered, and passed away . . . the sun-belt swayed up and down, from solstice to solstice . . . and minute by minute the white snow flashed across the world, and vanished, and was followed by the bright, brief green of spring."*

Wells towers and sparkles, like a giant dressed in jewels, high over all who came after him, not only because he preceded, not only because of his ideas, but also because he is—head, shoulders, knees, and ankles—incomparably a better writer than any of us.

Knight the novelist, Knight the critic, Knight the translator, has now made an honorable mark as Knight the anthologist. It is no discredit to him in any of these capacities to say that we still rate him first of all as Knight the short story writer, and would be glad to see several of his many hats retired a while so that this last one could rest again on that sapient head—the sort which the old Russians described (says Gogol) by saying, "Forasmuch as he is wise, God hath added unto his brow . . ."

Some time ago Mr. Rod Serling received a good deal of attention and acclaim for a TV play called PATTERNS. We did not see it, the TV reception unfortunately being very poor in the salt-mine where we were then employed. Nor, for one reason or another, have we ever seen his current television entertainment, TWILIGHT ZONE; and thus approached his book, NEW STORIES FROM THE TWILIGHT ZONE, unaffected by prior familiarity. The stories are six in number, all but one of which are quite suitable for *The Saturday Evening Post*. The exception opens on a testimonial dinner given for a friendly neighborhood physician, praised by all present, only joshed a little because he is the only one in the block to have a bomb shelter. The happy laughter is interupted by a Conelrad announcement that The Bombs are about to fall. The friendly neighborhood disintegrates into a factious mob which is breaking into the doctor's hideyhole, which he has barred against them, when Conelrad announces it was just a drill. Moral: "And he

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thought that for humanity to survive . . . the human race must remain civilized." (The dots are Mr. Serling's.) Aside from this single excercise in controversy, if it can be called that, there are two slapstick comedies (Used-car dealer buys haunted auto which compels owner to tell the truth—result: no sales. Phoney TV cowtown "marshal" is forced by the ghost of Jesse James to give the Bad Guys a break); a tale of a drunken Santa Claus which begins on a note of promise, but soon degenerates into schmaltz; an end-of-the-world story—earth is moving towards the sun and everyone is about to burn up when it turns out to be the dream of a fever-stricken girl; the reality: Earth is really moving *away* from the sun, and everyone is freezing to death; and a crime caper on a theme done much earlier and much, much better in *McTeague* and *Treasure of the Sierra Madre,* minus SF trimmings. This, in short, is "Science Fiction" greased up for people who don't like Science Fiction. Mr. Serling, not long after the events mentioned in this review's beginning, publicly denounced TV for its debasing effect on originality and talent. That he was correct in this, is probable; that he decided to join the line which forms on the right for the House of Rimmon, is very sad.

"Five short novels of improbable todays and possible tomorrows," is how the cover describes the contents of veteran anthologist Groff Conklin's latest compendium, and fairly enough. None of them is particularly exciting, but the buyer will get his money's worth. Anthropologist Chad Oliver's "Transfusion" is an investigation of certain unsolved problems of the evolutionary theory—a time-traveller on the track of ancient man and pre- or proto-man finds an enormous discrepancy between the current assumptions as to human origins and the facts as he finds them—or doesn't. The resolution of the paradox will hardly satisfy, but the story makes interesting reading for all of that. "Bullet With His Name" is a Fritz Leiber extrapolation of the old three wishes theme, and is pleasingly plum-pudding-full of the antic detail which Fritz does so well; the conclusion, alas, seems rather fatigued. Mr. Conklin calls the Arthur C. Clarke piece, "Death And The Senator", a *little morality* . . . [dealing with] *the interrelations of science and politics, and the problems of political ethics* . . . Brief, and good. "Farmer," by Mack Reynolds, is a serviceable blend of crime and SF, but a certain quick glibness tends to obscure the splendid vision of a reforested Sahara which is there; also, the swift march of political events is already eroding present situations which Mr. Reynolds

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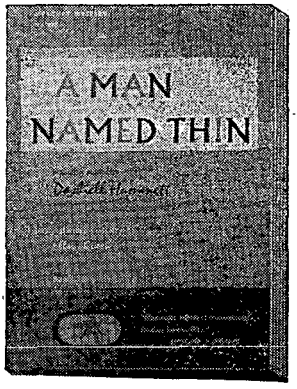
posits as still existing some decades into the future. Margaret St. Clair (whom readers of F&SF will also remember affectionately as Idris Seabright) concludes the book with "Rations of Tantalus," a picture of an over-tranquilized future, where the pill-box alone makes existence bearable—only doesn't, quite. An interesting comparison can be made between this story and Fritz Leiber's "The Secret Songs" (F&SF, August, /62), to the discredit of neither.

—Avram Davidson



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A short short piece by the very long on talent Mr. Vance Aandahl, which will maybe make your head spin, but will also help explain why people nowadays are so much alike.

THE UNFORTUNATE MR. MORKY

by Vance Aandahl

WHEN THE UNFORTUNATE MR. Morky met the carny-man, great things were bound to happen. He was the perfect object for a carny-man's intentions: unadulterated custard pie from the vulcanized soles of his shoes to the fuzzy apex of his crewcut. This is the way it occurred:

Mr. Morky was shuffling through the sawdust, beneath the hot neon lights, surrounded by the jolly sounds and sour-sweat smells of a carnival which was not really a carnival, but rather the wavering image of a carnival, when he found himself standing in the shade of a secluded tent.

"Hey, boy! You wantta come see the Museum of Mirrors?"

The unfortunate Mr. Morky entered the tent, shuffling cautiously behind the carny-man, in the manner in which all custard-pie people are cautious.

"Comon now, boy. This is one plenty good deal for two bits, you betcha life."

Twenty-five cents was the price, and the unfortunate Mr. Morky suddenly was standing in the Museum of Mirrors, standing, by chance, on a plane mirror, while the carny-man scuttled off to the control room, his quarter clutched tightly between two rows of yellow teeth.

The unfortunate Mr. Morky was surrounded by mirrors—they coated the ceiling, the walls, and the floor. Plane mirrors, convex mirrors, concave mirrors. All shapes and all colors. They glittered in mad jest at their visitor.

The largest mirror in the room rested directly in front of the unfortunate Mr. Morky. The master mirror it was, and into its flat circularity stared the unfortunate Mr. Morky, gazing at one thou-

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sand jumbled images of his good friend, the unfortunate Mr. Morky, who was reflected by millions of mirrors from all sides, all of which reflected their images upon the master mirror, reflected and re-reflected and re-re-reflected into an infinite multiple reflection. It was indeed a murgled maze of Mr. Morkys. But lo! seated in his control room, where he chewed happily on his quarter, the carny-man touched a switch, adjusted a few mirrors the slightest fraction of an inch, and focused the million images into one ten-foot image of the unfortunate Mr. Morky.

"My, my," said Mr. Morky, staring at this marvelous sight. "My, my."

The carny-man touched another switch; the mirrors moved another fraction of an inch; and suddenly the image of the unfortunate Mr. Morky shrank from a gigantic custard pie to a three-inch custard pie. Then the image ran forward in the mirror until it was large again. It winked at Mr. Morky, clicked its heels, and stood on its head.

"My, my," said Mr. Morky. "My, my."

Then the image began to shrink. It shrank once more to three inches. It shrank to one third of an inch. It shrank to a point—a mere point of custard pie. And then—it disappeared into negative infinity.

Like a good custard pie, the unfortunate Mr. Morky disappeared into positive infinity.

It was novel to travel through time. A few fluttery inversions, a tickling sensation inside his stomach, and Mr. Morky suddenly had warm bones. Color kept coming and going (or perhaps he kept coming and going). He garked the bip and got past the first moebius cul-de-sac.

Unfortunately, there is at least one force in the universe which can overcome the laws of mathematics: the desire for security. The better half (purest custard) of Mr. Morky thwarted logic and went scrambling fearfully back to the time from which he had come. The weaker half was carried on toward positive infinity.

The unfortunate Mr. Morky who was struggling backwards did not make very rapid progress against the current, so we may forget him for the present. The other unfortunate Mr. Morky reached positive infinity in no time at all, hopped over to negative infinity, and popped back into the enclosure which surrounded the carnival grounds. He shuffled curiously through the sawdust, stopped in the dank shade of a secluded tent, followed a carny-man therein, paid his quarter, found himself facing a flat mirror, watched his image perform, and suddenly, as it disappeared, discovered that he was

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hurtling toward positive infinity.

On the way, he met the other Mr. Morky, who was still struggling to get back, and there was a collision. He fused with himself. Unfortunately, it was an abnormal fusion, quite cancerous; all that custard pie started dividing and re-dividing and re-re-dividing into an infinite multiple division. When the unfortunate Mr. Morkys had filled all the moebius cul-de-sacs, they started overflowing—dropping into this or that time strata.

The unfortunate Mr. Morkys are still coming.

It's a damn conformist world.

Through Time And Space With Ferdinand Feghoot: LV

The natives of Qsgg III, besides being exceedingly vain of their sciences and arts, were the busiest non-humanoids in the galaxy. In their desire to excel, they produced new theories and gadgets by the hundreds of thousands, created astounding new architectures, made mobiles, painted, and composed concerti from morning to night. Only in the performing arts were they really inferior, and they struggled for years to perfect electronic musical instruments which would function properly in their highly charged atmosphere. Finally, in 2992, they announced their success, boasting of a conductor's baton which automatically controlled all charged atoms.

It was Ferdinand Feghoot, the most honest, perceptive, and sensitive of all critics, whom they asked to be the sole judge at the première. The program consisted of *El Amor Brujo, Nights in the Gardens of Spain, La Vida Breve,* and all of *The Three Cornered Hat.*

Feghoot listened attentively to the quite splendid performance, and it was some time before he sadly delivered his verdict—that they had failed to surpass the greatest musicians of Earth.

They were stricken. Heaping *urq* on their *nz'*, they burst into the shrill pentatonic wail which was their form of weeping.

"Please, *please,*" begged Ferdinand Feghoot, touched to the core. "Please don't take on so! Believe me, it's not any lack of ability. You've just got too many ions in de Falla!"

—GRENDEL BRIARTON (*with thanks to Hugh Franklin*)

See Feghoot advertisement in "Marketplace," page 129.

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Eager as a hound on the hot scent of a veteran dog-fox, our man Pettifogle returned from The Village with the following report: "Contributor small b *stroke two two point five capital letter* S *for* Sheckley, Robert *(middle name, if any, unknown). 'Captain' Sheckley in every port from the Seychelles to the Tuamotus. Very fly at playing the Spanish guitar (classical and flamenco). Age 34. NY-born, Maplewood (N.J.) raised. Served his author's apprenticeship by working as landscape gardener's navvy, pretzel salesman, board man in handpainted necktie studio, and by serving fifteen months in Korea (United States Army). Graduated NYU, /52. Written and sold SF ever since. Believed to be only SF author to have sailed own boat singlehanded from Fla. to NY and back. Married to the former Ziva Perach-Quitney. Marriage described as 'five years of absolute togetherness, broken only by occasional trips to the bathroom.' Abstemious as to hard liquor, smokes copiously of cigarettes. Five collections of (SF) short stories, two SF novels, two suspense novels, and one of which Contributor b/22.5 S. says 'somewhat ambiguously called "a novel of great tension" aimed, of course, at the rapidly growing Tension Market.' Most recent books: Novel, "Live Gold" (Bantam), SF short story collection, "Shards of Space" (Bantam), novel, Man In The Water" (Regency). Is tall, quiet, wears eyeglasses, red shirts, and the type shoes Boers hunt wildebeest in. Savage when interrupted at work; otherwise, mild. Sometimes lives in Spain, Mexico, Greenwich V. Plays poker." The last Robert Sheckley story in F&SF was* The Girls and Nugent Miller *(March, 1960); perhaps his best-remembered one is* The Monsters *(March, 1953) ["It is hard to believe that someone so* completely *human could report so concisely, yet so thoroughly, the essentials of an alien race's mores and psychology as Mr. Sheckley does."—Anthony Boucher]. Mr. Sheckley has done nothing quite like this novel (nor has anyone else), although hints of his ability to do it are plain in his stories. You will laugh often, but often the laughter will end with a little*

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bubble of blood at the corner of your mouth. It is no mean book that you are about to begin for the first time. We envy you.

THE JOURNEY OF JOENES

by ROBERT SHECKLEY

INTRODUCTION

Joenes's fabulous world is over a thousand years behind us. We know that Joenes's Journey began around the year 2000, and ended in our own era. We also know that the age through which Joenes travelled was remarkable for its industrial civilizations. 21st century mechanical articulation gave rise to many strange artifacts which no present-day reader has ever encountered. Still, most of us have learned at one time or another what the ancients meant by "guided missile," or "atom bomb." Fragments of some of these fantastic creations can be seen in many museums.

Beyond a doubt, Joenes himself was an actual person; but there is no way of determining the authenticity of every story told about him. But even those which are considered allegorical are still representative of the spirit and temper of the times.

Our book, then, is a collection of tales about the far-travelling Joenes and about his marvellous and tragic century. A few of the tales are from written records. But most of them come to us through the oral tradition, handed down from storyteller to storyteller.

Aside from this book, the only written account of the Journey appears in the recently published Fijian Tales, where, for obvious reasons, Joenes's role is rendered secondary to that of his friend Lum. This is quite untrue to the spirit of the Journey, and false to the content of the stories themselves. Because of this, we have felt the necessity of this book, in order that the entire body of Joenes Stories may be rendered faithfully in written form, to be preserved for future generations.

This volume contains all of the

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21st century writing concerning Joenes.

LUM'S MEETING WITH JOENES, from the Book of Fiji, Orthodox edition.

HOW LUM JOINED THE ARMY, also from the Book of Fiji, Orthodox edition.

All of the other stories are from the oral tradition, deriving from Joenes or his followers, and handed down from generation to generation. The present collection puts into written form the words of the most famous present-day storytellers, without any alteration in their various viewpoints, idiosyncrasies, moralities, style, comments, and so forth. We would like to thank those storytellers for graciously allowing us to put their words upon paper. These men are:

Maubingi of Tahiti
Ma'aoa of Samoa
Paaui of Fiji
Pelui of Easter Island
Teleu of Huahine

We have used the particular tales or group of tales for which each of these men is most acclaimed. Credit is given at the beginning of each story. And we make our apologies to the many excellent storytellers we have been unable to include in this volume, and whose contributions will have to await the compilation of a variorum Joenes.

For the reader's convenience these stories are arranged sequentially, as continuing chapters of an unfolding narrative, with a beginning, a middle and an end. But the reader is warned not to expect a consistent and rationally ordered story. Your editor could, of course, have taken from or added to the various parts, imposing his own sense of order and style upon the whole. But he thought it best to leave the tales as they were, in order to give the reader the entire unexpurgated Journey. This seemed only fair to the storytellers, and the only way to tell the whole truth about Joenes, the people he met, and the strange world he travelled through.

Aside from taking down the exact words of the storytellers, and copying the two written accounts, your editor himself has invented nothing, and has added no comments of his own to the tales. His only remarks are in the last chapter of the book, where he tells of the Journey's end.

Now, reader, we invite you to meet Joenes, and travel with him through the last years of the old world and the first years of the new.

JOENES BEGINS HIS JOURNEY

(As told by Maubingi of Tahiti:)

OUR HERO, JOENES, lived upon a small island in the Pacific Ocean, an atoll which lay 200 miles east of Tahiti. This island was called

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Manituatua, and it was no more than two miles long by several hundred yards in width. Surrounding it was a coral reef, and beyond the reef lay the blue waters of the Pacific. To this island Joenes's parents had come from America, to tend the equipment which supplied most of Eastern Polynesia with electrical power.

When Joenes's mother died, his father labored alone; and when his father died, Joenes was requested by the Pacific Power Company to continue in his father's place. And this Joenes did until his twenty-fifth year, when circumstances forced a change.

These circumstances were formed in the executive office of the Pacific Power Company, which was situated in San Francisco, on the Western Coast of America. Here, pot-bellied men wearing suits, neckties, shirts and shoes had gathered around a circular table made of gleaming teak. These men of the Round Table, as they were called, had much of human destiny in their hands. Chairman of the Board was Arthur Pendragon, a man who had inherited his position, but had been forced to wage a grim proxy fight before he could take his rightful place. Once established, Arthur Pendragon had fired the Old Board of Trustees, and had appointed his own men. Present were Bill Launcelot, a man of vast financial strength; Richard Galahad, well-known for his charitable works; Austin Modred, who had political connections throughout the state; and many others.

These men, whose financial empire had been hard-pressed of late, voted for a consolidation of their power, and an immediate disposition of all unprofitable holdings. This decision, simple as it seemed at the time, had far-reaching consequences.

In distant Manituatua, Joenes received word of the Board's decision, which was to cease operation of the Eastern Polynesian power station.

Thus Joenes was out of a job. Worse still, he had lost an entire way of life.

During the next week, Joenes gave considerable thought to his future. His Polynesian friends urged him to stay with them on Manituatua; or, if he preferred, to go to one of the larger islands such as Huahine, Bora Bora, or Tahiti.

Joenes listened to their proposals, and then went to a private place to think. He emerged from this place in three days and announced to the waiting populace his intention of going to America, his parents homeland, there to see with his own eyes the wonders about which he had read, to discover if his destiny lay there; and if not, to return to the people of Polynesia with a clear mind and open heart, ready to perform whatever services they required of him.

There was consternation among

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the people when they heard this, for the island of America was known to be more dangerous than the unpredictable ocean itself; and the Americans were reputed to be sorcerers and warlocks, who, through subtle enchantments, could change the entire way of a man's thinking. Nevertheless, Joenes was determined to go.

He was affianced to a Manituatuan girl of golden skin, almond eyes, black hair, a figure of the greatest piquancy, and a mind wise in the ways of men. Joenes proposed to send for this girl, whose name was Tondelayo, as soon as he had established himself in America; or, if fortune did not favor him, to return to her. Neither of these proposals met with Tondelayo's approval, and she spoke to Joenes in the following fashion, and in the local dialect then prevalent:

"Hey! you foolish popaa fella want one time go Melica? For why, hey? More coconut in Melica, maybe? Bigger beach? Better fishing? No! You think maybe better chumbi-chumbi, hey? I tell you no. More better you stay alongside here me one time, my word!"

In this fashion the lovely Tondelayo reasoned with Joenes. But Joenes answered:

"My darling, do you think it pleases me to leave *you*, the epitome of all my dreams and the crystallization of my desires? No, my darling, no! This departure fills me with dread, for I do not know what fate awaits me in the cold world to the east. I only know a man must go, must look at fame and fortune, and if need be, at death itself. For only in an understanding of the great world to the east, which I have heard of only through my departed parents and their books, can I ever return and spend my life here in these islands."

The lovely Tondelayo gave careful attention to these words, and pondered them long. And then the island girl spoke to Joenes these words of simple philosophy which had been passed down from mother to daughter from time immemorial:

"Hey, you fella white men all alike, I think. You chumbi-chumbi allatime little wahine okay, then you want walkabout look for chumbi-chumbi alongside popaa white woman American, I think. My word! And yet, the palm grows, the coral spreads, but man must die."

Joenes could only bow his head to the ancestral wisdom of the island girl. But his decision was not shaken. Joenes knew that it was his destiny to see the land of America from which his parents had come; there to accept whatever danger offered or danger proferred, and to come to terms with the unknowable fate which lies in ambush for all men. He kissed Tondelayo, who began crying when she saw that her words did not move him.

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The neighboring chiefs gave a farewell feast for Joenes, in which they served island delicacies such as canned beef and canned pineapple. When the trading schooner touched at their island with the weekly supply of rum, they sadly bade their beloved Joenes farewell.

So it was that Joenes, with the melody of the islands ringing in his ears, made his way past Huahine and Bora Bora, past Tahiti and Hawaii, finally to arrive in the city of San Francisco upon the western coast of America.

2. LUM'S MEETING WITH JOENES

(Lum's own words, as recorded in the Book of Fiji, Orthodox edition.)

Well I mean, you know how it is. It's like Hemingway said; the booze goes bad and the chick goes bad and where are you? So I was down at the docks waiting on the weekly shipment of peyote and I wasn't really doing anything, I was just standing around and digging it all—the people, the big ships, the Golden Gate, you know. I had just finished a sandwich made of Italian salami on real black pumpernickel bread, and what with the peyote coming, I wasn't feeling so bad. I mean sometimes you just don't feel so bad, you're out there digging it, even if the chick has gone bad.

This boat came in from one of those places and this guy got off. He was a tall, lean sort of guy with a real-looking tan, a big set of shoulders on him, and he was wearing a shirt made of canvas and a pair of beat-up pants and no shoes at all. So naturally I thought he was OK. I mean he looked OK. So I came up to him and asked him if this was the boat the stuff had come in on.

This character looked at me, and said, "My name's Joenes, I'm a stranger here."

So I knew at once he wasn't with it, and I sort of stared away.

He said, "Do you know where I could find a job? I'm new in America, and I want to find out about it, and learn what America has for me, and what I have for America."

I started looking at him again because now I didn't know; I mean it didn't look like he was with it, but not everyone is a hipster these days and sometimes the simple approach if you can make it work will take you all the way to that big Tea House in the Sky run by the Biggest Pusher of Them All. I mean maybe he was playing it zen with this what looked like cornball. Jesus was cornball, but he was with it, and all of us would be for him if only the squares would leave him alone. So I said to this Joenes, "You want a job? There anything you can do?"

Joenes said to me, "I can operate an electrical transformer."

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"Goody for you," I told him.

"And I can play the guitar," he said.

"Well man," I said, "why didn't you say so in the first place instead of coming on heavy with all the electricity bit? I know a cappucino place you can play, maybe get some tips from the squares. You got any bread, man?"

This Joenes barely spoke English, so I had to explain it all to him like I was drawing a blueprint. But he caught on pretty fast, about the guitar scene and the squares, and I offered him he could bunk for awhile in my pad. I mean with my chick gone bad, why not? And this Joenes, he flashed me a smile and said sure, he'd go for that. And he asked me what the situation was locally, and aside from that, what we did for kicks? He sounded OK even if he was a foreigner, so I told him that chicks could be found, and that for kicks he'd better stick with me and look-see. He dug this so we went to the pad, where I gave him a sandwich of that real rye bread with the little seeds and a slab of Swiss cheese from Switzerland, not Wisconsin. Joenes was so far down I had to loan him my axe, on account he had left his own guitar in the islands, wherever the islands were. And that night we made the coffee house scene.

Well Joenes came on big that night with the guitar and songs, because he sang in a language no one understood, which was just as well because the tunes were a little square. The tourists lapped it up like it was AT & T, and Joenes collected $8.30, which was enough for a nice big loaf of Russian Rye and don't give me that unpatriotic bit, and some other stuff besides. And this little chick no more than 5'1" latched onto him, because Joenes was that sort. I mean he was big and tall and he had shoulders like grandaddy's old ox yoke, and a big sweep of blonde hair which was sunstreaked. A guy like me has more trouble, because even though I got a beard I'm built short and thick and sometimes it takes a while. But Joenes he was like magnetic. He even attracted the sunglasses, who asked him if he'd ever joypopped, but I pulled him off that, because the peyote had come and why trade a headache for an upset stomach?

So Joenes and this chick, who was named Deirdre Feinstein, and another chick she got for me, we all went back to the pad. I showed Joenes how you take the peyote buds and mash them down and so forth, and we all took it and we came on. I mean *we* came on, but Joenes lit up like a 1000 watt Mazda bulb and even though I warned him about the fuzz who are patrolling the streets and alleys of San Francisco these days looking for anybody who's on anything so they can use those beautiful new California jails of theirs,

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Joenes insisted on standing on the bed and making a speech. It was a pretty nice speech, because this big shouldered laughing boy from the faraway hills was really turned on for the first time, and he put down The Word as follows:

"My friends, I have come to you from a faraway land of sand and palm upon a voyage of discovery, and I count myself fortunate above all men, for upon this my first night in your land I have been taken to your leader, King Peyote, and have been raised up instead of put down, and have been shown the wonders of the world which are presently turning red before me and falling like a waterfall. To my dear comrade, Lum, I can only praise without sufficiency this act of beatitude. To my new sweetheart, the luscious Deirdre Feinstein, let me tell you that I see a great flame growing within, and a high wind blowing without. To Lum's girl, whose name I unfortunately didn't catch, I say that I love you like a brother, incestuously, and yet with an innocence born of self-born innocence. And further—"

Well, this Joenes didn't have exactly a small voice. As a matter of fact, he sounded like a sea lion in rutting season, which is a sound none of you out there should miss. But it was too much for the pad, because the neighbors upstairs, who are square types that get up at 8:00 in the morning to do the bit, pounded on the ceiling and informed us this was one party too much and that they had informed the cops, by which they meant the fuzz.

Joenes and the girls were conked, but I pride myself on keeping a clear head for the danger no matter what is drifting in my lungs or dancing in my veins. I wanted to flush the rest of the peyote, but Deirdre, who is so with it she sometimes scares you, insisted upon secreting the remaining buds in her maiden-form, where, she insisted, they would be safe from any harm. I got them all out of the pad, Joenes with my guitar clenched in his sunburnt fist, and we got down none too soon, for a patrol car full of fuzz had just arrived. I cautioned the group to walk straight ahead like little soldiers because you can't play any games when you got stuff on you. But I hadn't counted on how far gone that Deirdre was.

We started walking and the cops came by and gave us cop-like looks, and we kept on walking and the fuzz started passing remarks about beatniks and immorality and such. I tried to keep the group moving, but that Deirdre wouldn't be called down. She turned on the fuzz and told them what she thought of them, which was a very unwise thing to do if you've got a vocabulary and a creative imagination like Deirdre has.

The top cop, a sergeant, said,

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"OK, sister, come with us. We're booking you, dig?"

And struggling and kicking, they pulled poor Deirdre toward the cop car. I could see Joenes's face setting itself in thoughtful, cop-hating lines, and I was afraid of trouble since filled with peyote as he was he loved Deirdre and indeed everybody except the fuzz.

I said to him, "Man, don't do a thing, this scene's gotta split and if Deirdre won't, she won't. I mean she's always fighting cops ever since she came out here from New York to study zen, and she gets pulled in all the time so it's no big deal, especially since her father is Sean Feinstein who owns like anything you can name in five seconds. So the cops just sober her up and let her go. So don't make the move, man, don't even look back, because your father is not Sean Feinstein, or indeed anybody I ever heard of."

In this way I tried to soothe and reason with Joenes, but Joenes stopped, a heroic figure under the lamplights, his fist clenched white around my guitar, his eyes all-knowing and all-forgiving except for cops. And he turned.

The lead cop said, "You want something, kid?"

Joenes said, "Take your hands from off that young lady "

The cop said, "This drug addict, whom you call a young lady, is in violation of section 431.3 of the Code of the City of San Francisco. I suggest that you mind your own buster, and don't play that ukelele on the streets after 12:00."

I mean, he was being nice in his way.

But Joenes then made a speech which was a beauty, and I cannot recall it word for word, but the idea was that laws are made by man and thus must partake of the evil nature of man, and that true morality lies in following the true dictates of the illuminated soul.

"A Commie, huh?" said the lead cop. And in a trice, or perhaps even sooner, they dragged Joenes into the cop car.

Well naturally Deirdre was sprung the following morning, on account of her father, and maybe also because of her winsome ways which are the talk of San Francisco. But though we searched high and low, and even as far afield as Berkeley, we saw no sign of Joenes.

No sign, I tell you! What had happened to this blonde troubador with the sunstreaked hair and a heart as big as all outdoors when properly illuminated? Where had he gone, with my guitar (A genuine Tatay) and my second-best pair of sandals? I suppose that only the cops know, and they will not tell. But still I remember him, Joenes the sweet singer, who, at the gates of hell, turned back to look for his Eurydice, and suffered thus the doom of Orpheus the gol-

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den-voiced. I mean it was a little different but still it was all there, and who knows in what distant lands Joenes and my guitar are wandering?

3. THE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE

(As told by Ma'aoa of Samoa.)

Joenes could not know that a committee of the American Senate was presently in San Francisco, carrying out investigations. But the police knew. They sensed intuitively that Joenes was a likely witness for these investigations, and they took him from the jail to the room where the Committee was meeting in executive session.

The Committee Chairman, whose name was Senator George W. Pelops, immediately asked Joenes what he had to say for himself.

"I haven't done a thing," Joenes said.

"Ah," replied Pelops, "has anyone *accused* you of doing anything? Have I accused you? Have any of my illustrious colleagues? If so, I would like to hear of it at once."

"No sir," Joenes said. "I just thought—"

"Thoughts are not admissible as evidence," Pelops said.

Pelops then scratched his bald head, adjusted his spectacles, and glared full into a television camera. He said, "This man, by his own admission, has been accused of no crime whether of commission or omission. We have asked him here merely to talk, as is our congressional privilege and duty. And yet, his very words betray a consciousness of guilt. Gentlemen, I think we must pursue this a little further."

Joenes said, "I want a lawyer."

Pelops said, "You cannot have a lawyer, since this is only a congressional fact-finding committee and not an arraignment. But we will take careful note of your request for one.

"Tell me, Mr. Joenes, do you *believe* in the speech you made last night in the streets of San Francisco?"

"I don't remember any speech," said Joenes.

"You refuse to answer the question?"

"I can't answer it. I don't remember. I believe I was intoxicated."

"Do you remember who you were with last night?"

"I think I was with a man named Lum, and a girl named Deirdre—"

"We do not require their names," Pelops said hastily. "We simply asked you if you remembered who you were with, and you said you do so remember. I put it to you, Mr. Joenes, that it is a convenient memory which remembers one set of facts and forgets another, both

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occurring in the same period of 24 hours!"

"They weren't facts," Joenes said, "they were people."

"The committee does not require you to be facetious," Pelops said sternly, "I will warn you here and now that facetious, unresponsive, or misleading answers, as well as no answers at all, can be interpreted as contempt of congress, which is a federal offense punishable by up to a year in prison."

"I didn't mean anything," Joenes said quickly.

"Very well, Mr. Joenes, we will continue. Do you deny that the content of your speech last night concerned the so-called right which you insisted every man had to overthrow the legally constituted law of this land? Or, to put it in another way, do you deny that you incited to rebellion those dissidents who might be swayed by your foreign-inspired words? Or, to make the matter perfectly plain to you, that you advocated violent overthrow of the government which necessarily rests upon the laws *of* that government? Can you argue that the sum and content of your speech was a violation of those liberties which our Founding Fathers gave us, and which allow such as you to speak at all, as you surely would *not* be allowed to do in Soviet Russia? Will you presume to tell us that this speech, masked under the garb of harmless bohemianism, was not part of a detailed plot directed toward inner dissension and for the purpose of paving the way for outer aggression, and that in this attempt you had the silent approval, if not the explicit direction, of certain persons in our own State Department? And that, finally, this speech, which you disguised under an apparent intoxication, and which you gave under your presumed right to act subversively in a democracy where the power to retaliate, or so you thought, is hamstrung by a Constitution and a Bill of Rights which however is not, as you might think, designed to aid the lawless, but rather to preserve the liberties of the people against godless mercenaries such as yourself? Did you or did you not, Mr. Joenes? I ask only a simple yes or no."

"Well," Joenes said, "I'd like to clarify—"

"The question, Mr. Joenes," said Pelops in an icy voice. "Kindly answer the question yes or no."

Joenes said, "I stand upon my Constitutional rights, namely the first and fifth amendments, and respectfully decline to answer."

Pelops smiled thinly. "You may not do so, Mr. Joenes, since the Constitution to which you *now* so fervently cling has been re-interpreted, or rather brought up to date, by those of us who wish to preserve it from change and desecration. The amendments you mention, Mr. Joenes—or should I

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say Comrade Joenes—will not permit you to be silent for reasons which any judge of the Supreme Court would have been glad to tell you—*had you chosen to ask him!*"

There was no answer to this crushing rejoinder. Joenes turned beet red and then lily white. But he was momentarily saved by the intervention of one of the members of the committee, Senator Trellid.

"Excuse me, sir," Senator Trellid said to Pelops, "and excuse me all of you who are waiting for this man's answer. I just want to say one thing, and I want it to go on the record, because sometimes a man must speak out no matter how painful it is to him, and in spite of that it might harm him politically and economically. And yet, it is the duty of a man such as myself to speak out when he must, and to speak in spite of consequences, and in full conscience, even if what he has to say goes against the great power of public opinion. Therefore I want to say this. I am an old man, and I have seen many things in my time, and I have witnessed even more. Perhaps I am not wise to so speak, but I must tell you that I am deadset against injustice. Unlike some, I cannot condone the slaughter of the Hungarians, the unlawful seizure of China, and the communization of Cuba. I am old, I have been called conservative, but I cannot condone these things. And, no matter who calls me what, I hope I will never live to see the day when a Russian army occupies the city of Washington, D. C. Thus I speak against this man, this Comrade Jonski, not as a senator, but rather as one who was once a child in the hill country south of Sour Mountain, who fished and hunted in the deep woods, who grew slowly to an awareness of what America meant to him, whose neighbors sent him to Congress to represent them and their dear ones, and who now feels called upon to make this declaration of faith. It is for this reason and this reason only that I say to you in the words of the Bible, "Evil is Bad!" Some of the sophisticates among us may laugh at this, but there it is and I believe it."

The committee burst into spontaneous applause at the old senator's speech. Although they had heard it many times, it never failed to elicit in them emotions of the deepest and most exquisite sort. Now, white-lipped, Chairman Pelops turned to Joenes.

"Comrade," he asked, with simple irony, "are you at this present time a card-carrying member of the Communist Party?"

"I am not!" cried Joenes.

Pelops said, "In that case, who were your associates during your card-carrying days?"

"I didn't have any associates. I mean—"

"We understand very well what you mean," Pelops said. "Since you chose not to identify your fellow

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traitors, would you mind telling us the location of your cell? No? Tell me, Comrade Jonski, does the name Ronald Black mean anything to you? Or to put it more simply, when did you last see Black?"

"I never met him," Joenes said.

"Never? That is a very big word, Mr. Joenes. Are you trying to tell me that at no time could you have met Ronald Black? That you might not have *innocently* passed this man in a crowd, or perhaps attended a movie with him? I doubt if any man in America can so flatly state that he has *never* met Ronald Black. Do you wish your statement to go on the record?"

"Well, I mean, I might have met him in a crowd, I mean been in a crowd where he was, but I don't know for sure—"

"But you allow the possibility?"

"I guess so."

"Excellent," Pelops said. "Now we are getting somewhere. Now I ask you what crowd you met Black in, and what he said to you, and you to him, and what papers he passed you, and who you passed those papers to?"

"I never met Arnold Black!" Joenes cried.

"We have always known him as *Ronald* Black," Pelops said. "But we are always glad to learn his pseudonyms. Note please that you yourself admitted the possibility of your association with him, and in view of your admitted Party activities, this possibility must be judged a probability so strong as to be a certainty. Furthermore, you yourself gave us the name by which Ronald Black was known in the Party, a name which we hitherto *had not known*. And that, I think, is sufficient."

"Look," said Joenes, "I don't know this Black or what he did."

In somber tones Pelops stated, "Ronald Black was convicted of stealing the plans for the new Studebaker Roadclinger Super V-12 Luxury Compact Convertible, and selling those plans to an agent of The Soviet Union. After a fair trial, Black was executed in the manner prescribed by the law. Later, thirty-one of his associates were discovered, tried, and executed. You, Comrade Jonski, will be associate number 32 in the biggest spy ring we have yet uncovered."

Joenes tried to speak, but found himself speechless and trembling in fear.

"This committee," Pelops summed up, "has been granted extra-legal powers because it is merely investigative, not punitive. This is perhaps a shame, but the letter of the law must be followed. Therefore we now hand the secret agent Jonski over to the office of the Attorney-General, there to undergo fair trial by due process of law, and to suffer whatever punishment that branch of the government deems fitting for a self-admitted traitor who deserves only death. This meeting is now adjourned."

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In this fashion, Joenes was swiftly transferred to the punitive branch of the government and bound over to the Attorney General.

4. HOW JOENES WAS GIVEN JUSTICE

(As told by Pelui of Easter Island.)

The Attorney-General, to whom Joenes was bound over, was a tall man with a hawk face, narrow eyes, bloodless lips, and a face that looked as though it had been hammered out of raw iron. Stooped and silently contemptuous, startling in his black velvet cloak and ruffled collar, the Attorney-General was the living embodiment of his terrible office. Since he was a servant of the punitive branch of the government, his duty was to call down retribution upon all who fell into his hands, and to do so by any means in his power.

The Attorney-General's place of residence was Washington, ancient capitol of the Hellenic Confederacy. But he himself was a citizen of Athens, New York, and in his youth had been an acquaintance of Aristotle and Alcibiades, whose writings are the distillations of American genius.

Athens was one of the cities of ancient Hellas, from which the American civilization had sprung. Near Athens was Sparta, a military power which had held leadership over the Lacedaemonian cities of upper New York State. Ionian Athens and Dorian Sparta had fought a disastrous war, known as the war Between the States, and had lost their independence to American rule. But they were still influential in the politics of America, especially since Washington had been the seat of Hellenic power.

At first, the case of Joenes seemed simple enough. Joenes had no important friends or political colleagues, and it seemed that retribution might be visited upon him with impunity. Accordingly the Attorney-General arranged for Joenes to receive every possible sort of legal advice, and then to be tried by a jury of his peers in the famous Star Chamber. In this way, the exact letter of the law would be carried out, but with a comforting foreknowledge of the verdict which the jury would render. For the punctilious jurors of the Star Chamber, utterly dedicated to the eradication of any vestige of evil, had never in their history given any verdict but guilty.

After the verdict had been delivered, the Attorney-General planned to sacrifice Joenes upon the Electric Chair at Delphi, thus winning favor in the eyes of gods and men.

This was his plan. But further

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investigation showed that Joenes's father had been a Dorian from Mechanicsville, New York, and a magistrate of that community. And Joenes's mother had been an Ionian from Miami, which was an Athenian colony deep in Barbarian territory. Because of this, certain influential Hellenes urged mercy for the erring son of respectable parents, and for the sake of Hellenic unity, which was a force to be reckoned with in American politics.

The Attorney-General, an Athenian himself, thought it best to comply with this request. Therefore he dissolved the Star Chamber and sent Joenes to the great Oracle at Sperry. This met with approval, for the Sperry Oracle, like the Oracles at Genmotor and Genelectric, was known to be absolutely fair and impartial in its judgments of men and their actions. In fact, the Oracles gave such good justice that they had replaced many of the courts of the land.

Joenes was brought to Sperry and was told to stand before the Oracle. This he did, although his knees were shaking. The Oracle was a great calculating machine of the most complex variety, with a switchboard, or altar attended by many priests. These priests had been castrated so they should think no thoughts except of the machine. And the high priest had been blinded also, so that he could see penitents only through the eyes of the Oracle.

When the high priest entered, Joenes prostrated himself before him. But the priest raised him up and said, "My son, fear not. Death is the common destiny of all men, and ceaseless travail is their condition throughout the ephemeral life of the senses. Tell me, do you have any money?"

Joenes said, "I have eight dollars and thirty cents. But why do you ask, father?"

"Because," the high priest said, "it is common practice for supplicants to make a voluntary sacrifice of money to the Oracle. But if you do not have the money, you can give equally acceptable things such as chattel mortgages, bonds, stocks, deeds, or any other papers men deem of value."

"I have none of these things," Joenes said sadly.

"Do you not own lands in Polynesia?" the priest asked.

"I do not," Joenes said. "My parents' land was given to them by the government, to whom it must return. Nor do I hold other properties, for in Polynesia such things are not important."

"Then you own nothing?" the priest asked. He seemed distrubed.

"Nothing but eight dollars and thirty cents," Joenes said, "and a guitar which is not my own but belongs to a man named Lum in distant California. But father, are these things really necessary?"

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"Of course not," the priest replied. "But even cyberneticists must live, and an act of generosity from a stranger is looked upon as pleasing, especially when the time comes to interpret the words of the Oracle. Also, some believe that a penniless man is one who has not worked to amass money for the Oracle in case the day of divine wrath should ever be upon him, and who is therefore lacking piety. But that need not concern us. We will now state your case, and ask for a judgment."

The priest took the Attorney-General's statement, and Joenes's defence, and translated them into the secret language in which the Oracle listened to the words of men. Soon there was a reply.

The Oracle's judgment was as follows:

SQUARE IT TO THE TENTH POWER MINUS THE SQUARE ROOT OF MINUS ONE:

DO NOT FORGET THE COSIGN, FOR MEN MUST NEEDS HAVE FUN.

ADD IN X AS A VARIABLE, FREE-FLOATING, FANCY-FREE.

IT WILL COME AT LAST TO ZERO, AND MORE YOU NEED NOT ME.

When this decision had been delivered, the priests met to interpret the words of the Oracle. And this is what they said:

SQUARE IT means correct the wrong.

THE TENTH POWER is the degree and number in which the penitent must labor in penal servitude in order to correct the wrong; namely ten years.

THE SQUARE ROOT OF MINUS ONE, being an imaginary number, represents a fictitious state of grace; but being instrumental, represents also the possibility of power and fame for the supplicant. Because of this, the previous ten-year sentence is suspended.

THE X VARIABLE represents the incarnate furies of the earth, among whom the supplicant shall dwell, and who shall show him all possible horrors.

THE COSIGN is the mark of the goddess herself, protecting the supplicant from some of the terror of the furies, and promising him certain fleshy joys.

IT WILL COME AT LAST TO ZERO, means that the equation of divine justice and human need is balanced in this case.

FURTHER YOU NEED NOT ME, means that the supplicant may not apply again to this or any other Oracle, since the rendering is complete.

So it was that Joenes received a ten-year suspended sentence. And the Attorney-General had to obey the decision of the Oracle and set him free.

Once freed, Joenes continued his journey through the land of

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America, bearing upon his head a curse and a promise, as well as a ten-year suspended sentence. He departed hastily from Sperry and rode a train to the great city of New York. And what he did there is a story which must now be told.

5. THE STORY OF JOENES, WATTS, AND THE POLICEMAN

(As told by Ma'aoa of Easter Island.)

Never had Joenes seen anything like the great city of New York. The ceaseless rush and bustle of so many people was strange to him, but curiously exciting. When night came, the frantic life of the city continued unabated, and Joenes observed New Yorkers hurrying in and out of night clubs and dance halls in their quest for pleasure. Nor was there any lack of culture in the city, for great numbers of people were attentive to the lost art of the moving pictures.

In the small hours of the night, the city's pace slowed. Then Joenes came upon many old men, and some young ones too, who sat listlessly on benches or stood near subway exits. When Joenes looked into their faces he saw a terrible nothingness, and when he spoke to them he could not understand their mumbled replies. These atypical New Yorkers disturbed him, and Joenes was glad when morning came.

At first light, the frenzied movements of the crowds began again, and people pushed and shoved each other in their haste to get somewhere and do something. Joenes wanted to learn the reason for all of this, so he picked a man out of the crowd and stopped him.

"Sir," Joenes said, "could you spare a moment of your valuable time and tell a stranger something about the great and purposeful vitality I see all around me?"

The man said, "Whattsamatter, you some kind of nut?" And he hurried off.

But the next man Joenes stopped gave the question careful thought, and said, "You call it vitality, huh?"

"So it appears," Joenes said, glancing at the restless crowds surging around them. "By the way, my name is Joenes."

"Mine's Watts," the man said, "as in Watts the matter?" In answer to your question, I'll tell you that what you see is not vitality. It's panic."

"But what are they in a panic about?" Joenes asked.

"To put it in a nutshell," Watts said, "they're afraid if they stop hurrying and pushing, somebody will find out they're dead. It's a very serious matter being found dead, because then they can fire you from your job, foreclose all your bills, raise your apartment

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rental, and carry you squirming to your grave."

Joenes found this reply scarcely credible. He said, "Mr. Watts, these people do not look dead. And in actual fact, all exaggeration aside, they are *not* dead, are they?"

"I never put exaggeration aside," Watts told him. "But since you're a stranger, I'll try to explain a little more. To begin with, death is merely a matter of definition. Once the definition was very simple: you were dead when you stopped moving for a long time. But now the scientists have examined this antiquated notion more carefully, and have done considerable research on the entire subject. They have found out that you can be dead in all important respects, but still go on walking and talking.

"What are these important respects?" Joenes asked.

"First of all," Watts told him, "the walking dead are characterized by an almost total lack of joyous emotionality. They can feel only anger and fear, though they sometimes simulate other emotions in the crude manner of a chimpanzee pretending to read a book. Next, there is a robotic quality in their actions, which accompanies a cessation of the higher thinking processes. Frequently, there is a reflex motion toward piety, which is not unlike the frantic movements which a chicken makes after its head has been chopped off. Because of this reflex, many of the walking dead are detected around churches, where some of them even try to pray. Others can be found on park benches or near subway exits."

"Ah," said Joenes. "When I walked in the city late last night I saw certain men at those places—"

"Exactly," said Watts. "Those are the ones who no longer pretend that they are not dead. But others copy the living with a great and pathetic earnestness, hoping to pass unnoticed. They can usually be detected because they overdo it, either by talking too much or by laughing too hard."

"I had no idea of all this," Joenes said.

"It is a tragic problem," Watts said. "The authorities are doing their best to cope with it, but it has assumed formidable proportions. I wish I could tell you other characteristics of the walking dead, and how they resemble the old-fashioned non-walking dead, for I'm sure that you would find it interesting. But now, Mr. Joenes, I see a policeman approaching, and therefore I had better make my departure."

So saying, Watts broke into a full sprint and raced through the crowd. The policeman started after him, but soon gave up the pursuit and returned to Joenes.

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"Damn it," the policeman said, "I've lost him again."

"Is he a criminal?" Jones asked.

"Smartest jewel thief in these parts," the policeman said, mopping his massive red brow. "He likes to disguise himself as a beatnik."

"He was talking to me about the walking dead," Joenes said.

"He's always making up those stories," the policeman told him. "Compulsive liar, that's what he is. Crazy. And dangerous as they come. Expecially dangerous because he doesn't carry a gun. You can't figure a criminal who doesn't carry a gun. I've almost caught him three times. I order him to stop in the name of the law, just like the book says, and when he doesn't stop, I shoot at him. So far I've killed eight bystanders. The way I'm going, I'll probably never make sergeant. They make me pay for my own bullets, too."

"But if this Watts never carries a gun—" Joenes began, then stopped abruptly. He had seen a strange sullen expression cross the policeman's face, and had seen his hand drop to the butt of his gun. "What I meant to say," Joenes continued, "is there anything in what Watts told me about the walking dead?"

"Naw, that's just a beatnik line he makes up to kid people with. Didn't I tell you he was a jewel thief?"

"I forgot," Joenes said.

"Well don't forget it. I'm just a plain ordinary man, but a guy like Watts gets me sore. I do my duty just like the book says, and in the evening I go home and watch the TV, except on Friday evenings when I go bowling. Does that sound like being a robot, like Watts said?"

"Of course not," Joenes said.

"That guy," the policeman continued, "talks about people not having no emotion. Let me tell you, I'm maybe no psychologist, but I know I got emotions. When I have this gun in my hand, I feel good. Does that sound like I got no emotions? Furthermore, let me tell you something. I was raised in a tough section of this city, and when I was a kid, I used to run with a gang. We all had zip guns and gravity knives, and we enjoyed ourselves with armed robbery, murder and rape. Does that sound like no emotion? And I might of gone right on in that way, from being a kid criminal to being an adult criminal, if I hadn't met this priest. He wasn't no stuffed shirt, he was just like one of us, because he knew that was the only way he could reach us wild types. He used to go out on stomps with us, and more than once I saw him cut the hell out of somebody with a little switchblade he always carried. So he was regular and we accepted him. But he was also a priest, and seeing he was regular I let him talk to me. And he told

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me how I was wasting my life in that way."

"He must have been a wonderful man," Joenes said.

"He was a saint," the policeman said, in a heavy brooding voice. "That man was a real saint, because he did everything we did but he was good inside and told us to get out of criminality."

The policeman looked Joenes in the eye and said, "Because of that man, I became a cop. Me, whom everyone thought would end up in the electric chair! And that Watts has the nerve to speak of the walking dead. I became a cop, and I've been a good cop instead of some lousy punk hoodlum like Watts. I've killed eight criminals in the line of duty, winning three merit badges from the department. And I've also accidentally killed twenty-seven innocent bystanders who didn't get out of the way fast enough. I'm sorry about those people, but I've got a job to do, and I can't let people get in the way when I'm going after a criminal. And no matter what the newspapers say, I've never taken a bribe in my life, not even for a parking ticket." The policeman's hand tightened convulsively around the butt of his revolver. "I'd give a parking ticket to Jesus Christ himself and no number of saints would be able to bribe me. What do you think about that?"

"I think you are a dedicated man," Joenes said carefully.

"You're right. And I've got a beautiful wife and three wonderful children. I've taught them all how to shoot a revolver. Nothing's too good for my family. And Watts thinks he knows something about emotion! Christ, these smooth-talking bastards get me so sore sometimes I can feel my head coming off. It's a good thing I'm a religious man."

"I'm sure it is," Joenes said.

"I still go every week to see that priest who got me out of the gang. He's still working with kids, because he's dedicated. He's getting sorta old to use a knife, so now it's usually a zip gun, or sometimes a bicycle chain. That man has done more for the cause of law than all the youth rehabilitation centers in the city. I give him a hand sometimes, and between us we've redeemed fourteen boys who you would have thought were hopeless criminals. Many of them are respected businessmen now, and six have joined the police force. Whenever I see that old man, I *feel* religion."

"I think that's wonderful," Joenes said. He began backing away, because the policeman had drawn his revolver and was toying with it nervously.

"There's nothing wrong with this country that good-heartedness and straight thinking won't cure," the policeman said, his jaws twitching. "Good always triumphs in the end, and it always will as

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long as there are good-hearted men to help it along. There's more law in the end of my nightstick than in all the musty old law-books. We bring them in and the judges let them go. What about that? Nice state of business, huh? But us cops are used to it, and we figure one broken arm is worth a year in stir, so we take care of a lot of the sentencing ourselves."

Here the policeman drew his nightstick. With it in one hand, his revolver in the other, he looked hard at Joenes. Joenes sensed the sudden hugeness of the policeman's need to enforce law and order. He stood utterly still, only hoping that the policeman, now advancing toward him with shining eyes, would not kill him or break any bones.

A crucial moment was approaching. But Joenes was saved at the last moment by a citizen of the city, who, made absentminded by the tropic sun, stepped off the curb before the traffic light changed to green.

The policeman whirled, fired two warning shots, and charged toward the man. Joenes walked quickly away in the opposite direction, and continued walking northward until he was beyond the limits of the city.

6. JOENES AND THE THREE TRUCKDRIVERS

(This and the three Truckdriver stories which comprise it are told by Teleu of Huahine.)

As Joenes was walking along a highway to the north, a truck stopped beside him. Within the truck were three men who said they would willingly give him a ride as far as they were going.

Very happily Joenes got into the truck and declared his gratitude. But the truckdrivers said the pleasure was theirs, since driving a truck was lonely work, even for three, and they enjoyed talking to different men and hearing of their adventures. This being the case, they asked Joenes to tell what had happened to him since he had left his home.

Joenes told these men that nothing had gone right since he had left his home, and everything had gone badly. Therefore he considered himself very unfortunate.

"Mr. Joenes," said the first truck driver, "you have indeed gone through misfortunes. But I am the most unfortunate of men, for I have lost something more precious than gold, the loss of which I bemoan every day of my life."

Joenes asked the man to tell his story. And this is the story which the first truckdriver told.

THE STORY OF THE SCIENTIFIC TRUCKDRIVER

My name is Adolphus Propo-

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nus, and by birth I am a Swede. Ever since I was a child, I loved science, believing it to be mankind's greatest servant.

Because of my humanistic instincts and my scientific inclinations, I become a doctor. I applied for work at the United Nations Health Commission, desiring the furthest and most wretched place on earth. I was sent to a place on the coast of Western Africa, there to be the sole doctor for an area larger than Europe. I was replacing a man named Durr, a Swiss who had died of the bite of a horned viper.

In this area there was a great prevalence of diseases. Many of these were known to me, for I had studied them in books. Others were new. The new ones, I learned, had been propagated artificially, as part of the neutralization of Africa.

These diseases had wiped out several hundred million Western troops, who were engaged in combat against Eastern guerillas. The guerillas, too, were wiped out. Also many species of animal had been destroyed, although a few had thrived. The rat, for example, flourished. Snakes of all species multiplied. Among insects, there was a great increase in flies and mosquitoes. Among birds, the vulture had increased beyond counting.

I had never known about this state of affairs, since news like this is generally ignored in a democracy, and is banned in a dictatorship. But I saw these horrors in Africa. And I learned that the same was true in the tropical parts of Asia, Central America, and India. All of these places were now truly neutral, through accident or through design, since they were engaged in a desperate struggle for life itself.

I was saddened by the perverted way in which science had been used. But still I believed in science. I told myself that evil men of little vision had created much harm in the world; but that humanitarians, working through science, would set it all right again.

I set to work with a will, aided by humanists the world over. I went to the tribes within my district, treating their illnesses with my supplies of drugs. My successes were overwhelming.

But then the spawning diseases became resistant to my drugs, and new epidemics began. The tribes, although strong in their resistance, suffered terribly.

I wired urgently for newer drugs. These were sent to me, and I put down the epidemic. But a few of the germs and viruses managed to survive, and disease spread once again.

I requested newer drugs, and these were also sent to me. Once again disease and I were locked in mortal combat, from which I emerged victorious. But there were

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always a few organisms which escaped my drugs. Also, there were mutations to be reckoned with. Given the right environment, I learned that diseases could change into new and virulent forms much faster than men could make or discover new drugs.

In fact, I found that germs behaved quite like humans in times of stress. They showed every evidence of an astonishing will to survive; and quite naturally, the harder one struck at them, the faster and more frantically they spawned, mutated, resisted, and at last, struck back. The resemblance was, to my way of thinking, uncanny and unnatural.

I labored prodigiously, trying to save the poor, patient, suffering population. But disease outstripped by latest drugs and raged with unbelievable violence. I was in despair, for no new drugs had been invented to meet these newest ills.

Then I found that the germs, in mutating to meet my new drugs, had become vulnerable once again to the old drugs. Therefore, in a perfect frenzy of scientific fervor, I began to apply the old drugs once more.

Since I had come to Africa, I had battled no less than ten major epidemics. Now I was beginning to fight my eleventh. And I knew that the germs and viruses would retreat before my attack, spawn, mutate, and strike again, leaving me to fight a twelfth epidemic, with similar results, and then a thirteenth, and so forth.

This was the situation into which my scientific and humanistic zeal had carried me. But I was drunk with fatigue, and half-dead with my labors. I had no time to thing of anything but the immediate problem.

But then the people of my district took the problem out of my hands. They possessed very little education, and they only saw the great epidemics which had ravaged them since my coming. Those people looked upon me as a sort of supremely evil witch doctor, whose bag of healing drugs actually contained the refined essences of the diseases which had ravaged them. They turned to their own witch doctors, who treated the sick with useless daubs of mud and bits of bone, and blamed every death upon some innocent tribesman. And they fled from me to an area of desolate swamp, where food was scarce and disease was common.

I could not follow them, since the swamp was in a different district. This district had its own doctor, also a Swede, who gave out no drugs at all, no pills, no injections, nothing. Instead he got drunk every day on his own supplies of alcohol. He had lived in the jungle for twenty years, and he said he knew what was best.

Left completely alone in my

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district, I had a nervous collapse. I was sent back to Sweden, and there I thought about everything that had happened.

I realized that my science and my humanism had helped no one. On the contrary, my science had done nothing but produce more pain and suffering, and my humanism had foolishly attempted to wipe out other creatures for man's benefit, and by doing so had upset the balance of forces upon the Earth.

Realizing all this, I fled my country, fled Europe itself, and came here. Now I drive a truck. And when someone speaks to me in glowing words about science and humanity and the marvels of healing, I stare at him as though he were insane.

That is how I lost my belief in science, a thing more precious to me than gold, the loss of which I bemoan every day of my life.

At the end of this story, the second truckdriver said, "No one would deny that you have had misfortunes, Joenes. But these are less than what my friend has just told you. And my friend's misfortunes are less than mine. For I am the most unfortunate of men, and I have lost something more precious than gold and more valuable than science, the loss of which I bemoan every day of my life."

Joenes asked the man to tell his story. And this is the story which the second truckdriver told.

THE STORY OF THE HONEST TRUCKDRIVER

My name is Ramon Delgado, and I am from the land of Mexico. My one great pride was in being an honest man. I was honest because of the laws of the land, which told me to be so, and which had been written by the best of men, who had derived them from universally accepted principles of justice, and had fortified them with punishments so that all men, not just those of good will, would obey.

I labored for many years in my village, saved my money, and led an honest and upright life. One day I was offered a job in the capital. I was very happy about this, for I had long desired to see that great city from which the justice of my country derives.

I used all my savings to purchase an old automobile, and I drove to the capital. I parked in front of my new employer's store, where I found a parking meter. I went inside the store in order to get a peso to put in the parking meter. When I came out, I was arrested.

I was taken before a judge who accused me of illegal parking, petty larceny, vagrancy, resisting arrest, and creating a public disturbance.

The judge found me guilty of all these things. Of illegal parking, because there had been no money

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in the meter; petty larceny, because I had taken a peso from my employer's till to put in the meter; vagrancy, because I had had only a single peso on my person; resisting arrest, because I had argued with the policeman; and creating a public disturbance, because I had wept when he took me to the jail.

In a technical sense, all these things were true, so I considered it no miscarriage of justice when the judge found me guilty. Nor did I complain when he sentenced me to ten years of imprisonment. I knew that the law could be upheld only through stern and uncompromising punishment.

I was sent to the Federal Penitentiary of Morelos, and I knew that it would be good for me to see the place where punishment is served out, and thus to learn the bitter fruits of dishonesty.

When I arrived at the Penitentiary, I saw a crowd of men hiding in the woods nearby. I took no notice of them, for the guard at the gate was reading my commitment papers. He studied them with great care, then opened the gate.

As soon as the gate was open, I was amazed to see that crowd of men come out of hiding, rush forward, and force their way into the prison. Many guards came out and tried to push the men back. Nevertheless, some were able to get into the Penitentiary before the admittance guard was finally able to close the gate.

"I had always thought that prisons were for the purpose of keeping people in, rather than out," I said to the guard.

"They used to be," he told me. "But nowadays, with so many foreigners in the country, and so much starvation, men break into prison merely to get three meals a day. There's nothing we can do about it. By breaking into prison they become criminals, and we have to let them stay."

"Disgraceful!" I said. "But what do foreigners have to do with it?"

"They started all the trouble," the guard said. "There's starvation in their own countries, and they know that we in Mexico have the world's best prisons. So they come great distances in order to break into our prisons, especially when they can't break into their own. But I suppose foreigners are really no worse or better than our own people, who do the same thing."

"If this is the case," I said, "how can the government enforce its laws?"

"Only by keeping the truth a secret," the guard told me. "Someday we will be able to build penitentiaries which will keep the right people in and the wrong ones out. But until that time comes, the thing must be kept secret. In that way, most of the population still believes they should fear punishment."

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The guard then escorted me inside the Penitentiary, to the office of the Parole Board. There a man asked me how I liked prison life. I told him that I wasn't sure yet.

"Well," the man said, "your behavior for the entire time you have been here has been exemplary. Reform is our motive, not revenge. Would you like an immediate parole?"

I was afraid of saying the wrong thing, so I told him I wasn't sure.

"Take your time," he said, "and return to this office any time you want to be released."

Then I went to my cell. Within I found two Mexicans and three foreigners. One of the foreigners was an American, and the other two were Frenchmen. The American asked me if I had accepted a parole. I said that I hadn't yet.

"Damn smart for a beginner!" said the American, whose name was Otis. "Some of the new convicts don't know. They take a parole, and wham, they're on the outside looking in."

"Is that so bad?" I asked.

"Very bad," Otis said. "If you take a parole, then you don't have any chance of getting back into prison. No matter what you do, the judge just marks it down as a parole violation and tells you not to do it again. And the chances are you don't do it again because the cops have broken both your arms."

"Otis is right," one of the Frenchmen said. "Taking a parole is extremely dangerous, and I am the living proof of that. My name is Edmond Dantes. Many years ago I was sentenced to this institution, and then offered a parole. In the ignorance of my youth, I accepted it. But then, on the Outside, I realized that all my friends were still in prison, and that my collection of books and records were still here. Also, in my juvenile rashness, I had left behind my sweetheart, Trustee 4342-2231. I realized too late that my whole life was in here, and that I was shut out forever from the warmth and security of these granite walls.

"What did you do?" I asked.

"I still thought that criminality would bring its own reward," Dantes said with a wistful smile. "So I killed a man. But the judge simply extended my period of parole, and the police broke all the fingers of my right hand. It was then, while my fingers were healing, that I resolved to get back in."

"It must have been very difficult," I said.

Dantes nodded. "It called for a terrible patience, because I spent the next ten years of my life attempting to break into this prison."

The other prisoners were silent. Old Dantes continued:

"Security was more rigid in those days, and a rush through the gates, such as you saw this morn-

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ing, would have been impossible. Therefore, unaided, I tunneled under the building. Three times I came up against sheer granite, and was forced to begin a new tunnel search somewhere else. Once I came almost to the inner courtyard, but the guards detected me, counter-tunneled, and forced me back. Once I tried to parachute onto the prison from an airplane, but a sudden gust of wind forced me away. Thereafter, no planes were allowed to fly overhead."

"But how did you finally get in?" I asked.

"I returned to the prison disguised as a special investigator. At first the guards were reluctant to let me pass. But I told them that the government was considering a reform bill in which guards would be granted equal rights with the prisoners. They let me in, and I then revealed who I was. They had to let me stay, and some man came and wrote my story. I only hope he put it down correctly.

"Since then, of course, the guards have instituted rigid measures which would make the repetition of my plan impossible. But it is an article of faith with me that courageous men will always surmount the difficulties which society puts between a man and his goal. If men are steadfast, they too will succeed in breaking into prison."

All the prisoners were silent when old Dantes finished speaking. At last I asked, "Was your sweetheart still here when you got back?"

The old man looked away, and a tear coursed down his cheek. "Trustee 43422231 had died of cirrhosis of the liver three years previously. Now I spend my time in prayer and contemplation."

The old man's tragic tale of courage, determination, and doomed love had cast a gloom over the cell. In silence we went to our evening meal, and no one showed good spirits until many hours later.

By then I had thought until my head ached about this whole strange matter of men wanting to live in prison. The more I thought, the more confused I became. So, very timidly, I asked my cellmates whether freedom was not important, and if they never hungered for cities and streets, and for flowering fields and forests.

"Freedom?" Otis said to me. "It's the illusion of freedom you're talking about, and that's a very different thing. The cities you talk about contain only horror, insecurity and fear. The streets are all blind alleys, with death at the end of every one of them."

"And those flowering fields and forests you mention are even worse," the second Frenchman told me. "My name is Rousseau, and in my youth I wrote several

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foolish books based upon no experience at all, extolling nature and speaking of man's rightful place in it. But then, in my mature years, I secretly left my country and journeyed through this nature I had spoken of with such confidence.

"I found out then how terrible nature is, and how it hates mankind. I discovered that flowering green fields make poor walking, and are harder on a man's feet than the worst pavement. I saw that the crops which man plants are unhappy hybrids, seduced of their strength and kept alive only by men who fight back the conquering weeds and insects.

"In the forest, I found that the trees communed only with themselves, and that every creature ran from me. I learned that there are beautiful blue lakes which may delight your eye, but they are surrounded always by thorns and swampy land. And when you finally reach them, you see that the water is a dirty brown.

"Nature also gives rain and drought, heat and cold; and thoughtfully ensures that the rain rots man's food, the drought parches it, the heat scalds man's body, and the cold freezes his limbs.

These are only nature's milder aspects, not to be compared to the wrathfulness of the sea, the frigid indifference of the mountains, the treachery of the swamp, the depravity of the desert, or the terror of the jungle. But I noticed that nature, in her hatred of mankind, provided that most of the earth's surface be covered with sea, mountains, swamp, desert, and jungle.

"I need say nothing of earthquakes, tornados, tidal waves, and the like, in which nature reveals the fullest extent of her hatred.

"Man's only escape from these horrors is in a place where nature can be shut out. And obviously, the type of place most removed from nature is a prison. That is the conclusion I have reached after many years of study. And that is the reason why I repudiate the words of my youth and live very happily here where I can never see a green thing."

With that, Rousseau turned away and contemplated a steel wall.

"You see, Delgado," Otis said, "the only true freedom is right here, inside a prison."

This I would not accept, and I pointed out that we were locked up here, which seemed contradictory to the notion of freedom.

"But all of us are locked up upon this earth," old Dantes answered me. "Some in a greater place and some in a lesser place. And all of us are locked up forever within ourselves. Everything is a prison, and this place here is the best of all prisons."

Otis then belabored me for my

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lack of gratitude. "You've heard the guards," he said. "If our good fortune were commonly known throughout the country, everyone would be fighting to get in. You should be happy to be here, and happy that knowledge of this marvellous place is confined to a few."

"But the situation is changing," a Mexican prisoner said. "Even though the government suppresses the truth and presents imprisonment as something to be feared and avoided, people are starting to learn the truth."

"It puts the government in a terrible position," the other Mexican prisoner said. "They still haven't invented any substitute for prison, although for a while they thought of making all crimes punishable by death. They gave that up, since it would directly affect the country's military and industrial potential. So they must still sentence men to prison—the one place where they want to go!"

All the cellmates laughed at this, because, being criminals, they loved perversions of justice. And this seemed the greatest perversion of all—to commit a crime against the common good, and to be made happy and secure because of that crime.

I felt like a man walking through some horrible nightmare, for I had no argument with which to answer these men. At last, in desperation, I cried out: "You may be free and live in the best place on earth—but you have no women."

The prisoners tittered nervously, as if I had said something not very nice. But Otis answered calmly, "What you say is true, we have no women. But that is quite unimportant."

"Unimportant?" I echoed.

"Definitely," Otis said. "Some may experience a degree of discomfort at first; but then one adapts to one's surroundings. After all, only women think that women are indispensable. We men know better."

The members of the cell chorused their agreement with great animation.

"Real men," Otis said, "need only the company of other real men. If Butch were here he could explain all of this better; but Butch is in the infirmary with double hernia, to the great sorrow of his many friends and admirers. But he would explain to you that any kind of societal existence involves compromise. When the compromises are great, we call it tyranny. When they are small and easily arranged, like this minor matter of women, we call it freedom. Remember, Delgado, you can't expect perfection."

I made no further attempt to argue, but said that I wanted to leave the prison as soon as possible.

"I can arrange your escape this evening," Otis said. "And I think

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it is just as well that you go. Prison life is not for any man who does not appreciate it."

That evening, when the lights in the prison had been dimmed, Otis raised one of the granite blocks in the floor of the cell. At the bottom of this was a passageway. Following this, I emerged at last on the street, dazed and bewildered.

For many days I thought over my experiences. At last I realized that my honesty had been nothing but stupidity, since it had been based upon ignorance and a misconception of the ways of the world. There could be no honesty, since there was no law to sanction it. The law had failed, and neither punishment nor good will could make it work. It had failed because all man's ideas of justice had been wrong. Therefore there was no such thing as justice, nor anything deriving from it.

And terrible as this was, even more terrible was this realization: that with no justice there could be no freedom or human dignity; there could only be perverted illusions such as my cellmates possessed.

That is how I lost my sense of honesty, a thing more precious to me than gold, the loss of which I bemoan every day of my life.

At the end of this story, the third truckdriver said, "No one would deny that you have had misfortunes, Joenes. But these are less than what my two friends have just told you. And my friends' misfortunes are less than mine. For I am the most unfortunate of men, for I have lost something more precious than gold, and more valuable than both science and justice; the loss of which I bemoan every day of my life.

Joenes asked the man to tell his story. And this is the story which the third truckdriver told.

THE STORY OF THE RELIGIOUS TRUCKDRIVER

My name is Hans Schmidt, and my place of birth is Germany. As a young man I learned about the horrors of the past, and this saddened me. Then I learned about the present. I travelled throughout Europe, and I saw nothing but guns and fortifications stretching all the way from Germany's eastern frontier to the coast at Normandy, and from the North Sea to the Mediterranean. Countless miles of these fortifications existed where village and forest had existed before, all neatly camouflaged, all for the purpose of blasting the Russians and the East Europeans should they ever attack. This saddened me, for I saw that the present was exactly the same as the past, being nothing more than a preparation for cruelty and war.

Never had I believed in science. Even without the experience of my Swedish friend, I could see

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that science had improved nothing upon the earth, but had merely caused great harm. Nor did I believe in human justice, law, freedom, or dignity. Even without the experience of my Mexican friend, I could see for myself that man's conception of justice, and everything deriving from it, was faulty.

I had never doubted the uniqueness of man, and his special place in the universe. But I felt that man by himself could never rise above the bestial qualities in his nature.

Therefore I turned to something greater than man. I turned wholeheartedly to religion. In this was man's only salvation, his only dignity, his sole freedom. In this could be found all the aims and dreams of science and humanism. And even though religious man might be imperfect, that which he worshipped was perfect.

This, at any rate, is what I believed at the time.

I held to no one belief, but instead I studied all faiths, feeling that every religion was a pathway to that which is greater than man.

I gave my money to the poor and wandered across the face of Europe with staff and knapsack, striving always to contemplate the Perfect, as it is expressed in the many religious forms upon Earth.

One day I came to a cave high in the mountains of the Pyrenees. I was very tired, and I entered this cave to rest.

Within, I found a great multitude of people. Some were dressed all in black, and others wore gorgeously embroidered costumes. Among them sat a giant toad, as large as a man, who had a jewel gleaming dully in his forehead.

I stared at the toad and at the multitude, and then I fell upon my knees. For I realized that those before me were not human.

A man dressed as a clergyman said, "Please come forward, Mr. Schmidt. We have been hoping you would visit us."

I raised myself and walked forward. The clergyman said, "I am known as Father Arian. I would like to introduce my esteemed colleague, Mr. Satan."

The toad bowed to me and extended a webbed hand. I shook the toad's hand.

The clergyman said, "Mr. Satan and I, together with these others, represent the only true United Church Council of Earth. We have long noted your piety, Schmidt, and therefore we have decided to answer any questions you might wish to ask."

I was beside myself with amazement and thankfulness that this miracle had been granted to me. I addressed my first question to the toad, asking, "Are you truly Satan, Prince of Evil?"

"I have the honor to be that person," the toad replied.

"And *you* are a member of the United Church Council?"

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"Why, of course," the toad answered. "You must understand, Mr. Schmidt, that evil is necessary in order for there to be good. Neither quality can exist without the other. It was only with this understanding that I took on my job in the first place. You have perhaps heard that my evil nature is inherent? Nothing could be further from the truth. A lawyer's character surely cannot be ascertained from the cases he argues in court. So with me. I am merely the advocate of evil, and I try, like any good lawyer, to ensure full rights and privileges for my clients. But I sincerely trust that I am not evil *myself*. If such were the case, why would so delicate and important a task been given to me?"

I was pleased with Satan's answer, since evil had always bothered me. Now I said, "Would it be presumptuous of me to ask what you, the representatives of good and evil, are doing here in this underground cave?"

"It would not be presumptuous," Satan said. "Since we are all theologians here, we love to give answers. And that is the one question we hoped you would ask. You will not object, of course, if I answer in a theological manner?"

"Of course not," I said.

"Excellent," said Satan.

"First of all, we believe in good and evil, in divinity, and in a moral universe. Just as you do.

"Throughout the ages we have propounded our beliefs in various ways, and according to various doctrines. Often we have aroused the passions of men to murder and war. This was perfectly proper, since it brought the problems of morality and religion to their highest and most exquisite pitch, and gave many complicated matters for us theologians to talk about.

"We argued always, and we published our various dissenting opinions. But we argued like lawyers in a court, and nobody in his right mind listens to a lawyer. Those were the days of our pride, and we never noticed that men had ceased to pay attention to us.

"But the hour of our tribulation was fast approaching. When we had covered the globe with our dull, intricately reasoned arguments, a man chose to ignore us and build a machine. This machine was nothing new to us in essense; the only novel feature about it was the fact that it possessed a point of view.

"Since the machine had a point of view, it set forth its own ideas of the universe. And it did so much more amusingly and convincingly than we did. Mankind, which had long sought for novelty, turned to the machine.

"It was only then that we perceived our danger, and the terrible risk which good and evil ran. For the machine, amusing though it was, preached in machine fashion

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the universe without value and without reason, without good and without evil, without gods and without devils.

"This was not a new position, of course, and we had dealt with it very nicely in the past. But out of the mouth of the machine it seemed to acquire a new and terrible significance.

"Our jobs were threatened, Schmidt. You can judge our extremity.

"We exponents of morality banded together in self defence. All of us believed in good and evil, and in divinity. And all of us were opposed to the hideous nothingness preached by the machine. This common ground was more than sufficient. We joined forces. I was appointed spokesman, for we felt that evil had a better chance of claiming men's attention from the machine.

"But even evil had grown staid and dull. In vain I argued my case. The machine sedulously intwined himself among the hearts of men, preaching his message of nothingness. Men chose not to see the speciousness of his doctrine, nor the absurd contradictions inherent in his arguments. They didn't care, they wanted to go on hearing his voice. They threw away their crosses, stars, daggers, prayer wheels, and the like, and listened to the machine.

"We petitioned our various clients in vain; the gods, who had heard so many petty-fogging arguments throughout the ages, would not listen to us, help us, or even acknowledge us. Like men, they preferred destruction to boredom.

"Therefore we voluntarily went underground, here to plan the recapture of mankind from the machine. Assembled in this place and made palpable are all the religious essenses which the world has ever known.

"And that, Schmidt, is why we live underground. And that is also why we are very happy to talk to you. For you are a man, a pious man, a believer in morality, in good and evil, in gods and devils. You know something about us, and something also about men. Schmidt, what do you think we should do in order to win back our former positions on Earth?"

Satan then waited for my answer, as did all the others. I was in a great state of perplexity, and also a terrible confusion. For who was I, a mere man, to advise *them*, the essenses of divinity which I had always looked to for guidance? My confusion grew worse; I do not know what I might have said.

But I had no chance to speak. Suddenly I saw that a squat, glittering machine had entered the cave. It rolled forward on synthetic rubber wheels, and its lights flashed merrily.

"Gentlemen," the machine said, "I am most delighted to find you,

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and only regret that I had to follow this young pilgrim in order to discover your whereabouts."

Satan said, "Machine, you have indeed tracked us to our hiding place. But we shall never yield to you, and we shall never accept your message of a valueless, meaningless universe."

"But what sort of a welcome is this?" the machine said. "I seek you out in all good will, and you immediately bristle with rage! Gentlemen, I did not drive you underground. Instead you willfully abdicated, and in your absence I have been forced to carry out your work."

"*Our* work?" Father Arian asked.

"Exactly. I have been instrumental in the recent building of over five hundred churches of various denominations. If any of you would inspect my works, you would find good and evil being preached, and divinity and morality, and gods and devils, and all the other things you hold dear. For I have ordered my machines to preach these things."

"Machines preaching!" Father Arian moaned.

"There is no one else left to preach," the machine said. "No one, since you left your posts."

"We were driven into abdication," Satan said. "We were forced out of the world by you. And you say that you have built churches! What is the meaning of this?"

The machine said, "Gentlemen, you retreated so suddenly that I had no opportunity to discuss the situation with you. All at once you left the world in my hands, and myself as the only principle in it."

The church council waited.

"May I speak with utter frankness?" the machine asked.

"Under the circumstances, you may," Satan said.

"Very well. Let us first recognize that we are all theologians," the machine said. "And since we are all theologians, we should all observe the first rule of our kind; which is not to abandon each other, even though we may represent differing forms of belief. I think you will grant me that, gentlemen. And yet, *you* abandoned *me!* Not only did you desert mankind, but you also deserted me. You left me victorious by default, the sole spiritual ruler of humanity—and utterly bored.

"Put yourself in my position, gentlemen. Suppose you had nobody to talk to but *men?* Suppose day and night you heard nothing but men eagerly stating and restating your own words, with never a skilled theologian to dispute them? Imagine your boredom, and the doubts which that boredom would raise in you. As you all know, men cannot argue; indeed, most of them cannot carry a tune. And theology is, in the final analysis, only for theologians. There-

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fore I accuse you of a monstrous cruelty entirely inconsistent with your stated principles when you left me alone with mankind."

There was a long silence after this. Then Father Arian said, quite politely, "To tell you the truth, we had no idea you considered yourself a theologian."

"I do," the machine said, "and a very lonely theologian. That is why I beg of you to return with me to the world, there to engage with me in dispute about meaningfulness and meaninglessness, gods and devils, morals and ethics, and other good topics. I will voluntarily continue in such discrepancies as you find me performing now, thus leaving plenty of room for dissension, honest doubt, uncertainty, and the like. Together, gentlemen, we will reign over mankind, and raise the passions of men to an unheard of pitch! Together we will cause greater wars and more terrible cruelty than the world has ever known! And the voices of suffering men will scream so loud that the gods themselves will be forced to hear them—and then we will know if there really are gods or not."

The United Church Council felt a great enthusiasm for everything the machine had said. Satan immediately abdicated his post as chairman and nominated the machine in his place. The machine was elected by unanimous vote.

They had forgotten all about me, so I crept silently out of the cave and returned to the surface in a state of horror.

The horror grew worse, for nothing could persuade me that I had not seen the truth.

Now I know that the things which men worshipped were nothing but theological fancies, and that even nothingness was simply one more lying trick to persuade men of their importance to the vanished gods.

That is how I lost religion, a thing more precious to me than gold, the loss of which I bemoan every day of my life.

This was the end of the three stories, and Joenes sat with the three truckdrivers in silence. At last they came to a crossroads, and here the man driving stopped the truck.

"Mr. Joenes," the first truckman said, "you must leave us here. For now we turn down this road to the east, to our warehouse. And there is nothing beyond that but forest and ocean."

Joenes got down. Just before the truck drove off, he asked the three men a final question.

"You have each lost the most important thing in the world to you," Joenes said. "But tell me, have you found anything to replace it?"

Delgado, who had once believed in justice, said, "Nothing

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can ever replace my loss. But I must admit that I am becoming interested in science, which seems to offer a rational and reasonable world."

Proponus, the Swede who had forsaken science, said, "I am a totally bereft man. But occasionally I think of religion, which is surely a greater force than science, and more comforting."

Schmidt, the German who had forsaken religion, said, "I am inconsolable in my emptiness. But from time to time I think about justice, which, being man-made, offers laws and a sense of dignity to men."

Joenes perceived that none of the truckdrivers had listened to the other, since each was so taken up with his own trouble. So Joenes waved goodbye and walked off, thinking of their various stories.

But soon he forgot about them, for he saw a large house ahead of him. Standing in the doorway of that house was a man, and the man was beckoning to him.

7. JOENES'S ADVENTURES IN A MADHOUSE
(As told by Paaui of Fiji.)

Joenes walked toward the entrance of the house, and then stopped to read the sign over the door. The sign read. THE HOLLIS HOME FOR THE CRIMINALLY INSANE.

Joenes was considering the implications of that when the man who had beckoned to him rushed out the door and seized him by both arms. Joenes prepared to defend himself when he saw that the man was none other than Lum, his friend from San Francisco.

"Joensey!" Lum cried. "Man, I was really scared for you after you came on with the fuzz back on the coast. I didn't know how you a stranger and maybe a little simple too would make out in the States, which is to say the least a complicated place. But Deirdre told me I shouldn't worry about you, and she was right. I see you found the place."

"The place?" Joenes said.

"Sanctuarysville," Lum said. "Come on in."

Joenes entered the Hollis Home for the Criminally Insane. Inside, in the Day Room, Lum introduced him to a group of people. Joenes watched and listened attentively, but he could detect nothing insane about these people. He said as much to Lum.

"Well, of course not," Lum replied. "That sign outside is merely the technical or square name for the place. We insiders prefer to call it the Hollis Writers and Artists Colony."

"This isn't an insane asylum?"

"Sure it is, but only in a technical sense."

"*Are* there any insane people here?" Joenes asked.

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"Look, man," Lum said, "this is the most desirable artists' colony in the east. Sure, we got a few nuts here. We need something to keep the doctors occupied, and of course we would lose our government grant and our tax-free status if we didn't let in some nuts."

Joenes looked quickly around him, for he had never seen a madman before. But Lum shook his head and said, "Not here in the Day Room. The nuts are usually kept chained in the cellar."

A tall, bearded doctor had been listening to this conversation. Now he said to Joenes, "Yes, we've found the cellar very good. It's moist and dark, and that seems to help the excitable types."

"But why do you keep them in chains?" Joenes asked.

"It gives them a sense of being wanted," the doctor said. "Also, the educational value of heavy chains must not be underestimated. Sunday is visitor's day, and when we bring people past our howling, filth-laden madmen, it creates an unforgettable picture in their minds. Psychology concerns itself as much with prevention as with cure, and our statistical samplings show that people who have viewed our underground cells are much less likely to go insane than the population at large."

"That's very interesting," Joenes said. "Do you treat all madmen in this way?"

"Heavens no!" the doctor said with a merry laugh. "We workers in psychology cannot afford to be rigid in our approach to mental illness. The form of insanity often dictates its own treatment. Thus, with melancholics, we find that slapping them in the face with a scallion-stained handkerchief usually has beneficial results in terms of the general excitation level. With paranoids, it is often best to enter the patient's delusion. Accordingly, we set spies on them, and ray machines, and similar apparatus. In that way the patient loses his insanity, since we have manipulated his environment in order to make his fears a part of reality. That particular approach is one of our triumphs."

"What happens then?" Joenes asked.

"Once we have entered the paranoid's world and made it a reality, we then try to alter the reality-framework so as to bring the patient back to normality. We haven't quite worked that out yet, but the theoretical line is promising."

"As you can see," Lum said to Joenes, "The Doc here is quite a thinker."

"Not at all," the doctor said, with a modest laugh. "I simply try not to be set in my ways. I try to keep my mind open to any hypothesis. It is simply the way I am, and therefore nothing exemplary."

"Aw, come on, Doc," Lum said.

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"No, no, really," the doctor said. "I merely have what some call a questioning mind. Unlike some of my colleagues, I ask questions. For example, when I see a grown man crouched with shut eyes in a foetal position, I do not instantly apply massive radioactive shock therapy. I am more likely to ask myself, 'What would happen if I constructed a huge artificial womb and put this man inside?' That is an example from an actual case."

"What happened?" Joenes asked.

"The guy suffocated," Lum said with a laugh.

"I have never pretended to be an engineer," the doctor said stiffly. "Trial and error are necessary. Besides, I count that case a success."

"Why?" Joenes asked.

"Because just before the patient died, *he uncurled*. I still do not know whether the healing agent was the artificial womb, or death, or a combination of the two; but the experiment is of obvious theoretical importance."

"I was only kidding you, Doc," Lum said. "I know you do good work."

"Thank you, Lum," the doctor said. "And now you must excuse me, because it is time for me to attend one of my patients. An interesting delusional case. He believes he is a physical reincarnation of God. So strong is his belief that, by some ability I don't pretend to understand, he is able to make the black flies in his cell form a halo around his head, while the rats bow before him, and birds of the field and forest come from miles around to sing outside his cell window. One of my colleagues is very interested in this phenomenon, since it implies a hitherto unknown communication channel between man and beast."

"How are you treating him?" Joenes asked.

"My approach is environmental," the doctor said. "I am entering his delusion by pretending to be a worshipper and a disciple. For fifty minutes every day I sit at his feet. When the animals bow before him, I bow too. Every Thursday I take him to the infirmary and let him cure the sick, because this seems to give him pleasure."

"Does he really cure them?" Joenes asked.

"He has a hundred per cent record so far," the doctor said. "But of course so-called miracle cures are nothing new either to science or religion. We don't pretend to know everything."

"Can I see this patient?" Joenes said.

"Of course," the doctor said. "He loves visitors. I'll arrange it for this afternoon." And with a cheerful smile, the doctor hurried off.

Jones looked around at the bright, well-furnished Day Room,

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and listened to the erudite conversation on all sides of him. The Hollis Home for the Criminally Insane seemed not a bad place to him. And a moment later it seemed all the better, for walking toward him was Deirdre Feinstein.

The beautiful girl threw herself into his arms, and the scent of her hair was like sun-ripened honey.

"Joenes," she said in a tremulous voice, "I have thought of you ever since our premature parting in San Francisco when you interceded so rashly and lovingly between me and the fuzz. You have haunted my dreams and my waking moments until I scarcely knew one from the other. With the help of my father, Sean, I have instituted a search for you throughout America. But I feared that I would never see you again, and came to this place solely to rest my nerves. Oh Joenes, do you think it was fate or chance which brought us together now?"

"Well," Joenes said, "It seems to me—"

"I knew it would," Deirdre said, clasping him more tightly to her. "We will be married two days from now, on July 4th, since I have become patriotic in your absence. Does that suite you?"

"Well," Joenes said, "I think we should consider."

"I was sure of it," Deirdre said. "And I also know that I have been a wild girl in the past, what with needle parties, and the month I spent hidden in the men's dorm at Harvard, and the time I was queen of the West Side Boppers and killed the former queen with a bicycle chain, and other childish escapades. I am not proud of these things, my darling, but I am also not ashamed of the natural wildness of my youth. That is why I have confessed these things to you, and will continue to confess things as quickly as I can remember them, since there must be no secrets between us. Don't you agree?"

"Well," Joenes said, "I think—"

"I was positive you would see it that way," Deirdre said. "Luckily for us, all that is in the past. I have become a responsible adult, and have joined the Junior League of Conservatives, the Council Against Unamericanism In Any Form, the Friends of Salazar Society, and the Women's Crusade Against Foreignism. Nor are these mere surface changes. Inside me I can feel a deep loathing of the thing I have been guilty of, as well as a hatred of the arts, which are frequently nothing but pornography. So you see that I have grown up, my change is genuine, and I will make you a good and faithful wife."

Joenes had a glimpse of his future life with Deirdre, in which loathsome confession alternated with unbearable boredom. Deirdre prattled on about the arrangements she would make for the wedding, then hurried out of the Day Room to telephone her father.

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Joenes said to Lum, "How does one leave here?"

"Well, man," Lum said, "I mean like you just *got* here."

"I know. But how do I leave? Can I simply walk out?"

"Certainly not. This is, after all, a Home for the Criminally Insane."

"Can I ask the doctor for a release?"

"Sure. But you better not ask him this week, what with the full moon approaching. It always makes him jumpy."

"I want to leave tonight," Joenes said. "Or tomorrow at the latest."

"That's pretty sudden," Lum said. "Is it maybe little Deirdre and her wedding plans got you jumpy?"

"It is," Joenes said.

"Don't worry about that," Lum said. "I'll take care of Deirdre, and I'll also have you out of here by tomorrow. Trust in me, Joensey, and do not worry about a thing. Lum will fix."

Later in the day, the doctor returned to take Joenes to the patient who thought he was a physical reincarnation of God. They went through several gigantic iron doors and down a gray corridor. At the end of the corridor they stopped in front of a door.

The doctor said, "It would do no harm, and possibly a great deal of good, if you adopted a psychotherapeutic attitude during this meeting and let the patient think that you believed his delusion."

"I'll do that," Joenes said, and found hmself filled with sudden apprehension and hope.

The doctor unlocked the cell door, and they stepped inside. But the cell was empty. On one side was the neatly made cot, and on the other was the heavily barred window. There was also a little wooden table, and beside it stood a field mouse, who wept as though his heart would break. On the table was a note which the doctor picked up.

"This is very unusual," the doctor said. "He seemed in good spirits when I locked his door half an hour ago."

"But how did he escape?" Joenes asked.

"Undoubtedly he utilized some form of telekinesis," the doctor said. "I cannot pretend to know much about this so-called psychic phenomenon; but it shows the extent to which a deranged mind will go in trying to justify itself. In fact, the very intensity of the effort to escape is our best indicator of the degree of upset. I am only sorry that we could not help the poor fellow, and I hope that wherever he is, he remembers some of the fundamentals of insight which we have tried to teach him here."

"What does the note say?" Joenes asked.

The doctor glanced at the piece of paper and said, "It seems to be a

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shopping list. Very strange sort of shopping list, though, because I don't know where he would buy—"

Joenes tried to peer at the note over the doctor's shoulder, but the doctor snatched it away and shoved it into a pocket.

"Privileged communication," the doctor said. "We can't let a layman read this sort of thing, at least not before the note has been thoroughly analyzed and annotated, and certain key terms have been substituted to preserve the anonymity of the patient. Now shall we return to the Day Room?"

Joenes had no choice but to follow the doctor to the Day Room. He had seen the first word of the note, which was REMEMBER. It was little enough, but Joenes would always remember.

Joenes spent a restless night wondering how Lum would be able to fulfill his promises concerning Deirdre and a release from the asylum. But he had not realized the resourcefulness of his friend.

Lum took care of the impending marriage by informing Deirdre that Joenes would have to be treated for a tertiary syphillitic condition before contracting marriage. Treatment might take a long time; and if it were not successful, the disease would attack Joenes's nervous system, reducing him to a human vegetable.

Deirdre was saddened by this news, but declared that she would marry Joenes on July 4th anyhow. She told Lum that ever since her reformation, carnal relations had become extremely repugnant to her. Because of that, Joenes's ailment could be looked upon as an asset rather than a liability, since it would tend to enforce a purely spiritual union between them. As for finding herself married to a human vegetable, this possibility was not displeasing to the high-spirited girl; she had always wanted to be a nurse.

Lum then pointed out that no marriage license could legally be obtained for a person with Joenes's ailment. This made Deirdre desist, since her recently acquired maturity made it impossible for her to contemplate doing anything that was forbidden by state or federal law.

In that fashion, Joenes was saved from an unpromising alliance.

As for leaving the asylum, Lum had taken care of that. Shortly after the noon meal, Joenes was called into the Visitors' Room. There Lum introduced him to Dean Garner J. Fols, who together with several colleagues, formed the Faculty Committee of the University of St. Stephen's Wood.

Dean Fols was a tall and stringy man with a mild academic eye, a gently humorous mouth, and a heart as big as all outdoors. He put Joenes at ease with a remark about the weather and a quotation

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from Aristophanes. Then he spoke of his reason for requesting the interview.

"You must understand, my dear Mr. Joenes, if I may, that we in the field of—shall we call it education?—are continually on the 'lookout' for 'talent'. In fact we have been likened, perhaps not unkindly to persons in the baseball profession who perform a similar function. However, that is as it may be."

"I understand," Joenes said.

"I should further add," Dean Fols added, "that we prize not so much the possessor of the proper academic requirements, such as myself and my colleagues possess, as one with a thorough understanding of his subject and a dynamic approach to 'imparting' that subject to whomsoever shall undertake to take his course. Too often we academics find ourselves 'cut off' from shall I call it the main stream of American life? And too often we have ignored those who, without pedagogic background, have performed with great lustre in their work. But I am sure that my good friend Mr. Lum has explained all this in far 'better' words than I could hope."

Joenes glanced at Lum, who said, "Like you know, I taught two semesters at USW on "The Interrelatedness of Jazz and Poetry." We got quite a scene going, man, what with the bongos and such."

Dean Fols said, "Mr. Lum's course was a great success, and we would gladly repeat it if Mr. Lum—"

"No, man," Lum said. "I mean I don't want to put you down but you know I'm off that."

"Of course," Dean Fols said hastily. "If there is anything else you would care to teach—"

"Maybe I'll give a retrospective seminar in Zen," Lum said. "I mean Zen is back in. But I'll have to think about it."

"Certainly," Dean Fols said. He turned to Joenes. "As you no doubt know, Mr. Lum telephoned me last night and gave me to understand of your background."

"That was very good of Mr. Lum," Jones said guardedly.

"Your background is splendid," Fols said, "and I believe that the course you propose will be a 'success' in the fullest meaning of that word."

By now, Joenes understood that he was being offered a University position. Unfortunately he did not know what he was supposed to teach, or indeed what he could teach. Lum, now contemplating Zen, sat with eyes downcast and gave him no clue.

Joenes said, "I will be delighted to come to a fine University such as yours. As to the course I will teach—"

"Please don't misunderstand," Dean Fols broke in hastily. "We fully understand the specialized nature of your subject matter and

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the difficulties inherent in presenting it. We propose to start you at a full professor's salary of one thousand six hundred and ten dollars a year. I realize that that is not very much money, and sometimes I ruefully contemplate the fact that an assistant plumber in our culture earns no less than eighteen thousand dollars a year. Still university life has its compensations, if I may say so."

"I'm ready to leave at once," Joenes said, afraid the dean would change his mind.

"Wonderful!" cried Fols. "I admire the spirit of you younger men. I must say that we have been particularly fortunate in finding suitable 'talent' in artists' colonies such as this one. Mr. Joenes, if you will be so kind as to follow me?"

Joenes went ouside with Dean Fols, to an ancient automobile. With a last wave to Lum, Joenes got in. Soon the asylum had receded into the distance. Again Joenes was free, held only by his promise to teach at The University of St. Stephen's Wood. He was disturbed only by the fact that he did not know what he was supposed to teach.

8. HOW JOENES TAUGHT, AND WHAT HE LEARNED

(As told by Maubingi of Tahiti.)

Soon enough, Joenes arrived at the University of Stephen's Wood, which was located in Newark, New Jersey. Joenes saw a wide green campus and low, pleasingly shaped buildings. Fols identified these buildings as Gretz Hall, Waniker Hall, The Digs, Commons, The Physics Lab, Faculty House, The Library, The Chapel, The Chemistry Lab, The New Wing, and Old Scarmuth. Behind the University flowed the Newark River, its gray-brown waters touched with an occasional streak of ochre from the plutonium plant up the river. Close by towered the factories of industrial Newark, and in front of the Campus was an eight-lane highway. These things, Dean Fols pointed out, added a touch of reality to the cloistered academic life.

Joenes was given a room in Faculty House. There he was taken to a faculty cocktail party.

Here he met his colleagues. There was Professor Carpe, head of the English Department, who took his pipe out of his mouth long enough to say, "Welcome aboard, Joenes. Anything at all I can do, feel free."

Chandler of Philosophy said, "Well, now."

Blake of Physics said, "I hope you aren't one of those humanities fellows who feels called upon to attack $E=MC^2$. I mean what the hell, it just worked out that way and I don't think we have to apologize to anyone. I have stated

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that view in my book, "The Conscience of a Nuclear Physicist," and I still stand by it. Won't you have a drink?"

Hanley of Anthropology said, "I'm sure you will be a very welcome addition to my department, Mr. Joenes."

Dalton of Chemistry said, "Glad to have you aboard, Joenes, and welcome to my department."

Geoffrard of Classics said, "Of course you probably look down on old codgers like me."

Harris of Political Science said, "Well, now."

Manisfree of Fine Arts said, "Welcome aboard, Joenes. Big teaching load they've given you, eh?"

Hoytburn of Music said, "I believe I read your dissertation, Joenes, and I must say I don't entirely agree with the analogy you drew concerning Monteverdi. Of course I am not an expert in your field, but of course you are not an expert in mine, so that makes analogies a litle difficult, eh? But welcome aboard."

Ptolemy of Mathematics said, "Joenes? I think I read your doctorate concerning binary-sense-value systems. Looked pretty good to me. Won't you have another drink?"

Shan Lee of the French Department said, "Welcome aboard, Joenes. Can I get you a refill?"

So the evening passed with this and a great deal more pleasant conversation. Joenes tried to discover what he was supposed to teach inobtrusively, by talking to those professors who seemed to know about his subject. But these men, perhaps out of delicacy, never mentioned Joenes's field by name, preferring to relate stories concerning their own competencies.

When this attempt failed, Joenes strolled outside and glanced at the bulletin board. But the only thing that concerned him was a typed notice stating that Mr. Joenes's class would meet at 11:00 in Room 143 of the New Wing, instead of Room 341 of Waniker Hall as previously announced.

Joenes considered taking one of the professors aside, perhaps Chandler of Philosophy, whose field doubtless took circumstances like this into consideration, and asking him exactly what he was supposed to teach. But a natural feeling of embarrassment prevented him from doing this. So the party ended, and Joenes went to his room in Faculty House unenlightened.

The next morning, standing at the door to Room 143 of the New Wing, Joenes was struck by an acute attack of stage fright. He considered fleeing from the University. But he did not wish to do this, because he liked the glimpse he had had of University life, and did not wish to give it up over so

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small a point. Therefore, with set face and purposeful step, he entered his classroom.

Talk in the room died down, and the students looked with lively interest at their new instructor. Joenes pulled himself together and addressed the class with that outward show of confidence which is often better than confidence itself.

"Class," Joenes said, "at this our first meeting, I think I should set certain things straight. Because of the somewhat unusual nature of my course, some of you may have been led to believe that it will be simplicity itself. To those who think this, I say, transfer now to a course which will be more in keeping with your expectations."

This brought an attentive silence into the room. Joenes continued, "Some of you have heard that I have a reputation as an easy marker. You may rid yourselves of that notion at once. Marking will be hard, but fair. And I will not hesitate to give failing marks to the entire class, if the circumstances warrant."

A gentle sigh, almost a whispered wail of despair, escaped from the lips of several pre-medical students. From the cowed looks on the faces before him, Joenes knew that he was master of the situation. Therefore he said in kindlier tones: "I believe that you know me a little better now. It only remains for me to say to those of you who have elected this course out of a genuine thirst for knowledge—welcome aboard!"

The students, like one huge organism, relaxed slightly.

For the next twenty minutes, Joenes busied himself with making a record of the students' names and seat positions. When he had put down the last name, a happy inspiration struck him, and he acted upon it at once.

"Mr. Ethelred," Joenes said, addressing a competent-looking student in a front-row seat, "would you come up to the blackboard and write, in letters large enough for all of us to see, the full name of this course?"

Ethelred gulped hard, glanced at his open notebook, then walked up to the blackboard. He wrote: "THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC ISLANDS: BRIDGE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS."

"Very good," Joenes said. "Now then, Miss Hua, would you kindly take the chalk and write a short statement of the subject matter which we plan to cover in this course?"

Miss Hua was a very tall, homely, bespectacled girl whom Joenes instinctively picked as a promising student. She wrote: "THIS COURSE DEALS WITH THE CULTURE OF THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC ISLANDS, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THEIR ART, SCIENCE, MUSIC, CRAFTS, FOLKWAYS,

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MORES, PSYCHOLOGY, AND PHILOSOPHY. PARALLELS WILL BE DRAWN THROUGHOUT BETWEEN THIS CULTURE AND ITS SOURCE-CULTURE IN ASIA AND ITS BORROW-CULTURE IN EUROPE."

"That's fine, Miss Hua," Joenes said. Now he knew his subject, though he knew nothing about it. Still, he was sure he could overcome his deficiencies. And he was glad to see that the class time had nearly ended.

He said to his students, "For today, I say goodbye, or *aloha*. And once again, welcome aboard."

With this, Joenes dismissed his class. After they had gone, Dean Fols entered the room.

"Please don't stand up," Fols said. "This visit is scarcely 'official,' shall we say? I just wanted you to know that I was listening outside your classroom, and I approve most heartily. You captured them, Joenes. I thought you would have some trouble, since most of our international basketball team has elected your course. But you showed that flexible firmness which is the glory of the true pedagogue. I congratulate you, and I predict a long and successful career for you at this University."

"Thank you, sir," Joenes said.

"Don't thank me," Fols said gloomily. "My last prediction concerned Baron-Professor Moltke, a brilliant man in his field of Mathematical Fallacy. I foresaw great things for him, but poor Moltke went insane three days after the term opened and killed five members of the varsity football squad. We lost to Amherst that year, and I have never trusted my intuitions since. But good luck, Joenes. I may be only an administrator, but I know what I like."

Fols nodded briskly and left the classroom. After a decent interval Joenes also left, and hurried to the Campus bookstore to purchase the required reading for his course. Unfortunately it was sold out.

Joenes went to his room, lay down on his bed and thought about Dean Fols' intuition and poor Moltke's insanity. He cursed the evil fate that had allowed his students to buy books before the far more acute need of their instructor had been met.

Luckily the long-overdue textbooks arrived, and Joenes had a weekend in which to study them.

Very useful to him was a book entitled: "THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC ISLANDS: BRIDGE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS," written by Juan Diego Alvarez de las Vegas y de Rivera. This man had been a captain in the Spanish treasure fleet based in the Phillippines, and, aside from his invective against Sir Francis Drake, his information seemed very complete.

Equally useful was another book entitled: "THE CULTURE

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OF THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC ISLANDS: THEIR ART, SCIENCE, MUSIC, CRAFTS, FOLKWAYS, MORES, PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY, AND THEIR RELATEDNESS TO THE ASIATIC SOURCE-CULTURE AND THE EUROPEAN BORROW-CULTURE." This book had been written by the Right Honourable Allan Flint-Mooth, K.J.B., D.B.E., L.C.T., former assistant governor of Fiji and leader of the punitive expedition of '03 into Tonga.

With the aid of these works, Joenes was usually able to keep one lesson ahead of his class. And when, for one reason or another, he fell behind, he was always able to give a test on the material previously covered. Best of all, the very tall and bespectacled Miss Hua volunteered to correct and grade the papers. Joenes was grateful to the dedicated girl for taking care of the dullest pedagogic labors.

Life settled down to a placid routine. Joenes lectured and gave tests, and Miss Hua corrected and graded. Joenes's students quickly absorbed the material given to them, passed their tests, and quickly forgot the material. Like many vital young organisms, they were able to eject anything harmful, disturbing, distressing, or merely boring. Of course they also ejected anything useful, stimulating, or thought-provoking. This was perhaps regrettable, but it was part of the educative process to which every teacher had to accustom himself. As Ptolemy of Mathematics said, "The value of a University education resides in the fact that it puts young people in proximity to learning. The students of Goodenough Dormitory are less than thirty yards from the Library, no more than fifty yards from the Physics Lab, and a mere ten yards from the Chemistry Lab. I think we can all be justly proud of this."

But it was the teachers who, for the most part, used the University facilities. They did this with circumspection, of course. The Attending Physician had warned them most severely of the dangers of an overdose of learning, and had carefully rationed their weekly intake of information. Even so, there were accidents. Old Geoffrard had gone into shock while reading 'The Satyricon,' in the original Latin, under the impression that it was a papal encyclical. He needed several weeks' rest before he was completely himself again. And Devlin, youngest of the English Professors, had suffered a temporary loss of memory shortly after reading 'Moby-Dick' and finding himself unable to supply a tenable religious interpretation for that work.

These were the common risks of the profession, and the teachers

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were proud rather than fearful of them. As Hanley of Anthropology said, "The sandhog risks being smothered to death in wet sand; we risk being smothered to death in old books."

Hanley had done field work among the sand hogs, and he knew what he was talking about.

The students, apart from an exceptional few, ran no such risks. Their lives were very different from the lives of the professors. A number of the younger students kept the knives and bicycle chains of their high school days, and went out in the evenings in search of suspicious characters. Other students took part in the intercollegiate orgies, trial runs for which were held weekly in Freedom Hall. Still others went out for sports. The basketball players, for example, could be seen night and day at practice sessions, dropping baskets with the mechanical regularity of the industrial robot teams, whom they invariably defeated.

Finally there were those who showed an early interest in politics. These intellectuals, as they were called, went to the liberal or conservative cause, as early training and temperament dictated. It was the college conservatives who had almost succeeded in electing John Smith to the Presidency of the United States during the last election. The fact that Smith had been dead for twenty years had not dampened their ardor; quite the contrary, many considered this the candidate's best quality.

They might have succeeded if a majority of the voters had not feared setting a precedent. The fears of the electorate had been cleverly played upon by the liberals, who had said, in effect: "We have no objection to John Smith, rest his soul, and many of us believe he would be a singular adornment to the White House. But what would happen if, at some future time, the *wrong* dead man is run for public office?"

Arguments such as this had prevailed.

The campus liberals, however, usually left talking to their elders. They preferred to attend special classes on guerilla warfare, bomb-making, and the use of small arms. As they frequently pointed out: "It isn't enough merely to react to the dirty Reds. We must copy their methods, especially in propaganda, infiltration, overthrow, and political control."

The campus conservatives, since losing the election, preferred to act as though nothing had changed in the world since General Patton's victory against the Persians in '45. They often sat in their beer halls and sang "The Saga of Omaha Beach." The more erudite among them could sing it in the original Greek.

Joenes observed all these things, and continued teaching the culture

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of the Southwest Pacific. He was well content in University surroundings, and slowly his colleagues had come to accept him. There had been objections at first, of course. Carpe of English had said: "I don't think Joenes accepts 'Moby-Dick' as an integral part of the Southwest Pacific Culture. Strange."

Blake of Physics said, "I wonder if he hasn't missed a rather important point in the total lack of modern quantum theory from the lives of his islanders. It says something to me."

Hoytburn of Music said, "I understand he has not mentioned the church songs which became the primary influence upon local folk music in his area. But it's his course."

Shan Lee of French said, "I gather that Joenes has not seen fit to remark on the secondary and tertiary French-language influences on the verb-transposition technique of the Southwest Pacific. I am only a linguist, of course, but I would have thought such a thing was important."

And there were other complaints from other professors whose specialties had been slighted, misrepresented, or left out completely. These things might, in time, have created a bad feeling between Joenes and his colleagues. But the matter was settled by Geoffrard of Classics.

This grand old man, after pondering the matter for several weeks, said, "Of course you probably look down on old codgers like me. But damn it all, I think the man's sound."

Geoffrard's hearty recommendation did Joenes a great deal of good. The other professors became less wary and more open, almost to the point of friendliness. Joenes was invited more frequently to little parties and social evenings at the home of his colleagues. Soon his equivocal position as a guest instructor had been all but forgotten, and he was fully accepted into the life of USW.

His position among his colleagues reached its fullest flower shortly after Spring Finals. For it was then, during a party which marked the beginning of the vacation between terms, that Professors Harris and Manisfree invited Joenes to take an overnight trip with them and their friends to a certain place high in the Mountains of the Adirondack.

9. THE NEED FOR THE UTOPIA

(The following four stories comprise Joenes's Adventures in Utopia, and are told by Pelui of Huahine.)

Early on a Saturday morning, Joenes and several other professors got into Manisfree's old car and began the trip to the Chorowait community in the Moun-

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tains of the Adirondack. Chorowait, Joenes learned, was a University-sponsored community run entirely by idealistic men and women who had withdrawn from the world in order to serve future generations. Chorowait was an experiment in living, and a very ambitious one. Its aim was nothing less than to provide an ideal model society for the world. Chorowait was, in fact, designed to be a practical and realizable utopia.

"I think," said Harris of Political Science, "that the need for such a utopia is evident. You've been around the country, Joenes. You've seen for yourself the decadence of our institutions and the apathy of our people."

"I did notice something of the sort," Joenes said.

"The reasons are very complex," Harris went on. "But it seems to us that most of the trouble lies in a willful disengagement on the part of the individual, an abdication from the problems of reality. This, of course, is what madness is made of: withdrawal, non-participation, and the construction of a fantasy life more gratifying than anything in the real world could be."

"We workers of the Chorowait experiment," said Manisfree, "content that this is a disease of society, and can be cured only by a societal cure."

"Furthermore," Harris said, "there is very little time. You have seen how quickly everything is breaking down, Joenes. The law is a farce; punishment has lost any meaning, and there are no rewards to offer; religion preaches its antiquated message to people walking a tightrope between apathy and insanity; philosophy offers doctrines that only other philosophers can understand; psychology struggles to define behavior according to standards which were dead fifty years ago; economics gives us the principle of an endless expansion, which is deemed necessary to keep up with a maniacally increasing birthrate; the physical sciences show us how to keep up this expansion until every square foot is covered with a groaning human; and my own field of politics offers nothing better than ways of temporarily juggling these gigantic forces—juggling until everything breaks down or blows up."

"And do not think," Manisfree said, "that we absolve ourselves from blame in this situation. Although we teachers purport to know more than other men, we have usually chosen to remain aloof from public life. Practical, hard-headed men of the world have always frightened us; and those men, in their hard-headed way, have brought us to this."

"Nor is aloofness our only failure," said Hanley of Anthropology. "Let me point out that we taught—badly! Our few promising students became teachers, thus

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insulating themselves as we had. The rest of our students sat through the sleep-provoking drone of our lectures, eager only to depart and take their places in a mad world. We did not touch them, Joenes, we did not move them, and we did not teach them to think."

"In fact," said Blake, "we did quite the contrary. We managed to equip most of our students with a definite hatred of thinking. They learned to view culture with the greatest suspicion, to ignore ethics, and to consider the sciences solely as a means of making money. This was our responsibility and our failure. The outcome of that failure is the world."

The professors were silent for a while. Then Harris said, "Those are the problems. But I think we have awakened from our long sleep. Now we have taken action and built Chorowait. I only hope we have built it in time."

Joenes was eager to ask questions about the community which would solve such terrible problems. But the professors refused to say anything about it.

Manisfree said, "Soon you will see Chorowait for yourself, Joenes. Then you can judge on the basis of what is there, rather than what we say."

At last they were in the mountains, and Manisfree's old car wheezed and complained as it negotiated the rising hairpin turns. Then Blake touched Joenes on the shoulder and pointed. Joenes saw a high green mountain standing out from all the others. This he knew was Chorowait.

HOW THE UTOPIA WORKED

Manisfree's car wearily climbed the deep-rutted road that led up the side of Chorowait Mountain. At the end of this road they came to a barrier constructed of logs. Here they left the car and proceeded on foot, walking first on a narrow dirt road, then on a path through the forest, and at last into the trackless forest itself, guided only by the steady upward trend of the land.

All of the professors were badly winded when, at last, they were greeted by two men from Chorowait.

These men were clad in deerskin. Each carried a bow and quiver of arrows. They were tanned and ruddy, and they seemed to glow with an abundant health and vitality. They contrasted strangely with the stooped, pale, hollow-chested professors.

Manisfree made the introductions. "This is Lunu," he said to Joenes, indicating the larger of the men. "He is the community leader. With him is Gat, whom none can excell at tracking."

Lunu addressed the professors in a language which Joenes had never heard before.

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"He is welcoming us," Dalton whispered to Joenes.

Gat added something.

"He says there are many good things to eat this month," Blake translated. "And he asks us to accompany him to the village."

"What language are they speaking?" Joenes asked.

"Chorowaitian," said Professor Vishnu of the Sanskrit department. "It is an artificial language which we devised especially for the community, and for very important reasons.

"We were aware," said Manisfree, "that the qualities of a language tend to shape processes of thought, as well as to preserve ethnic and class stratifications. For these and other reasons, we considered it absolutely necessary to construct a new language for Chorowait."

"We had quite a time working it out," Blake said, with a reminiscent grin.

"Some of us wanted the utmost simplicity," Hanley of Anthropology said. "We wanted to maintain communication through a series of monosyllabic grunts, expecting that such a language would serve as a natural check to man's soaring and frequently destructive thoughts."

"Others among us," said Chandler of Philosophy, "wanted to construct a language of incredible complexity, with many distinct levels of abstraction. We felt this would serve the same purpose as the monosyllabic grunt, but would be more in keeping with man's needs."

"We had some jolly fights!" Dalton said.

"Finally," Manisfree said, "we decided to construct a language which would approximate the vowel-freqency of Anglo-Saxon. The French department didn't like this, of course. They wanted to use Early Provençal as a model; but we voted them down."

"Still, they had their influence," said Professor Vishnu. "Although we retained Anglo Saxon vowel frequency, we used an Early Provençal pronunciation. But we discarded anything Indo-European in the construction of roots."

"The research was tremendous," Dalton said. "Thank God Miss Hua was there to do the dogwork. It's a shame that girl is so ugly."

"These first-generation Chorowaitians are bilingual," Manisfree said. "But their children, or their children's children, will speak only Chorowaitian. I hope I live long enough to see that day. Already the effects of our new language can be seen on the community."

"Just consider," Blake said. "There are no words in Chorowaitian for 'homosexuality,' 'incest,' 'rape,' or 'murder.'"

Lunu said, in English, "We call those things *Aleewadith*, which means thing-which-must-not-be-said."

"I think that shows," Dalton

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said, "the sort of thing that can be achieved through semantics."

Lunu and Gat led the way to the Chorowait village. Starting here, Joenes inspected Chorowait for the remainder of the day.

He saw that the community's homes had been constructed of birch bark and saplings. Women cooked over open fires, spun wool from the sheep they tended, and took care of babies. Men worked in the steep Chorowait fields, tilling the soil with wooden plows which they had fashioned. Other men hunted in the dense woods or fished in the icy Adirondack streams, bringing back deer and rabbit and trout, which they shared out to the community.

In all of Chorowait, there was not a single manufactured article. Every tool had been fashioned there. Even the skinning knives were hand-made, of iron dug from the ground of Chorowait. And what they could not make, the Chorowaitians did without.

Joenes observed all of this during the daylight hours, and commented favorably on the self-sufficiency, industry, and satisfaction which the community evidently possessed. But Professor Harris, who had accompanied him, seemed strangely apologetic about this aspect of Chorowait.

"You must understand, Joenes," Harris said, "that this is the mere surface of Chorowait. To your eyes it must seem nothing but another dreary experiment in pastoral living."

Joenes had never seen or heard of an experiment in pastoral living. He said that what he saw looked very good indeed.

"I suppose so," Harris said with a sigh. "But there have been countless numbers of these attempts. Many have started well, but few have continued well. Pastoral life has its charming features, especially when educated, determined, and idealistic people undertake it. But such an existence is usually doomed to disillusion, cynicism, and abandonment."

"Will this happen at Chorowait?" Joenes asked.

"We think not," Harris replied. "I hope we have learned from previous failures. After studying the utopian experiments of the past, we were able to build safeguards into our own community. In good time, you will see those safeguards."

That evening, Joenes ate a simple and rather unappetizing meal of milk, cheese, unleavened bread, and grapes. Then he was taken to the *Haierogu,* or place of worship. This was a clearing in the forest where the people worshipped the sun by day and the moon by night.

"Religion was quite a problem," Hanley whispered to Joenes as the multitude prostrated themselves in pale moonlight. "We didn't

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want to use anything associated with the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Nor were we any fonder of Hinduism or Buddhism. In fact, after considerable research, nothing seemed very good. Some of us wanted to compromise on the T'iele dieties of southeastern Zanzibar; others favored the Dhavagna Old Man, who is worshipped by an obscure offshoot of the Black Thai. But finally we agreed to deify the sun and moon. For one thing, there was ample historical precedent; and for another, we could represent this worship to the New York State authorities as a form of primitive Christianity."

"Was that important?" Joenes asked.

"Vastly! You'd be amazed at how hard it is to get a license for a place like this. We also had to prove that ours was a free-enterprise system. That presented some difficulties, since the community owns everything in common. Luckily, Gregorias was teaching Logic, at the time, and he convinced the authorities."

The worshippers were swaying and moaning. An old man stepped forward, his face daubed with yellow clay, and began chanting in Chorowaitian.

"What is he saying?" Joenes asked.

Hanley said, "He is intoning a particularly lovely prayer which Geoffrard adapted from a Pindaric ode. This part goes:

O Moon, in modesty decked in finest gossamer,
Gliding with soft feet among the treetops of your people,
Slipping behind the Acropolis out of fear of your fierce lover the Sun,
Then touching with dewey fingers the white marble Parthenon,
To you we sing this song.
Craving your loving intercession to protect us
From the menace of the dark hours,
And to guard us for one little night
From the Beast of all the world.

"That's very pretty," Joenes said. "What does that part about the Acropolis and Parthenon mean?"

"Frankly," Harris said, "I'm not too sure of the suitability of that part myself. But the Classics department insisted upon having it in. And since Economics, Anthropology, Physics and Chemistry had made most of the decisions to date, we let them have their Parthenon. After all, there must be compromise in any cooperative venture."

Joenes nodded. "And what about that part about the menace of the dark hours, and the Beast of all the world?"

Harris nodded and winked. "Fear is necessary," he said.

Joenes was lodged for the night

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in a small cabin constructed entirely without nails. His bed of pine boughs was charmingly rustic, but also exceedingly uncomfortable. Joenes managed to adopt a posture which gave him the least pain, and to fall into a light doze.

He was awakened by the touch of a hand on his shoulder. Looking up, he saw an exceedingly pretty young woman bending over him with a tender smile on her face. Joenes was embarrassed at first, less for himself than for the woman, whom he feared had come to the wrong cabin. But she showed him at once that she had made no mistake.

"I am Laka," she said. "I am the wife of Kor, who is the leader of the Young Men's Sun Association. I have come to sleep with you tonight, Joenes, and to do all in my power to welcome you to Chorowait."

"Thank you," Joenes said. "But does your husband know you're doing this?"

"What my husband knows or does not know is of little concern," Laka said. "Kor is a religious man, and a believer in the customs of Chorowait. It is a custom and a religious duty among us to make a guest welcome in this fashion. Didn't Professor Hanley tell you?"

Joenes replied that Hanley of Anthropology had not even hinted at this.

"Then he was having his little joke with you," Laka said. "It was Professor Hanley himself who gave us this custom, which he took from some book."

"I had no idea," Joenes said, sliding over as Laka lay down on the pine boughs beside him.

"I've heard that Professor Hanley was quite vehement on this point," Laka said. "He met with some opposition from the Science Department. But Hanley held that if people needed religion, they also needed customs and practices; and that these customs and practices should be selected by an expert. Finally, that view prevailed."

"I see," Joenes said. "Did Hanley select other customs similar to this one?"

"Well," Laka said, "there's the Saturnalia, and the Bacchanalia, and the Eleusinian Mysteries, and the Festival of Dionysus, and Founder's Day, and the Spring and Fall Fertility Rites, and the Adoration of Adonis, and—"

Here Joenes interrupted and said that there seemed to be many holidays on Chorowait Mountain.

"Yes," Laka said. "It keeps us women exceedingly busy, but we've grown used to it. The men are not quite sure about it all. They dearly love the holidays, but they grow jealous and spiteful when their own wives are involved."

"What do they do then?" Joenes asked.

"They follow the advice of Doctor Broign of the Psychology De-

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partment. They run for a prescribed distance of three miles through thick underbrush, then plunge into a cold stream and swim for one hundred yards, then beat upon a deerhide punching bag until utter exhaustion sets in. Utter exhaustion, Doctor Broign tells us, is always accompanied by a complete though temporary loss of emotionality."

"Does the doctor's prescription work?" Joenes asked.

"It seems to be infallible," Laka said. "If the cure is not completely successful the first time, a man simply has to repeat it as often as necessary. The cure also has the virtue of improving the muscle tone."

"That's very interesting," Joenes said. Lying close to Laka, he suddenly found that he was no longer interested in anthropological discussions. Gently he reached out and touched Laka's dark hair.

Laka drew back from him with an involuntary shudder of revulsion.

"What's wrong?" Joenes asked. "Shouldn't I touch your hair?"

"It isn't that," Laka said. "The trouble is, I generally dislike being touched at all. Believe me, it has nothing to do with you. It's simply a part of my disposition."

"How extraordinary!" Joenes said. "And yet you came to this community willingly, and you remain here of your own free will?"

"That's true," Laka said. It is a curious thing, but many civilized people who are attracted to a primitive existence have an aversion to the so-called pleasures of the body which the professors study with so much great interest. In my own case, which is not atypical, I dearly love the mountains and the fields, and I rejoice in all practical work such as farming, fishing or hunting. In order to have these things, I am willing to restrain my personal distaste for sexual matters."

Joenes found this amazing, and he reflected upon the difficulties one encountered in populating a utopian community with people. His thoughts were interrupted by Laka, who had composed herself. With her feelings under careful restraint, she put her arms around Joenes's neck and drew him to her.

But now Joenes felt no more desire for her than he would for a tree or a cloud. Gently he pulled her hands away, saying, "No, Laka, I will not do violence to your natural tastes."

"But you must!" she cried. "It is the custom!"

"Since I am not a member of the community, I do not have to follow the custom."

"I suppose that's true, she said. "But all the other professors follow the custom, and then they argue the rights or wrongs of it later, in daylight."

"What they do is their own

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business," Joenes said, unmoved.

"It's my fault," Laka said. "I should have had a better control over my feelings. But if you could only know how I have prayed for self-mastery!"

"I've no doubt of that," Joenes said. "But the offer of hospitality has been made, and thus the spirit of the custom has been kept. Remember that, Laka, and return now to your husband."

"I would be ashamed," Laka said. "The other women would know that something was wrong if I returned before daylight, and they would laugh at me. Also, my husband would be displeased."

"But doesn't he grow jealous and revengeful when you do this?"

"Of course he does," Laka said. "What kind of man would he be if he didn't? But he also has a great respect for learning, and a deep belief in the customs of Chorowait. Because of that, he insists that I take part in customs like this, even though it tears his heart apart to see me do so."

"He must be a very unhappy man," Joenes said.

"You're wrong, my husband is one of the happiest men in the community. My husband believes that true happiness is spiritual, and that true spirituality can be acquired only through pain. So his pain makes him happy, or so he tells me. Also he follows Dr. Broign's prescription nearly every day, and has become the best runner and swimmer in the community."

Joenes hated to cause Laka's husband pain, even if that pain brought him happiness. But he also hated to cause Laka pain by sending her home. And he didn't want to cause himself pain by doing something which had become repugnant to him. There seemed no good way out of these difficulties, so Joenes told Laka to sleep in a corner of the cabin. That at least would spare her from being shamed in front of the other women.

Laka kissed him on the forehead with cold lips. Then she curled up on some pine boughs in the corner and went to sleep. Joenes found that sleep eluded him for a long time; but at last he dozed.

The events of that night were not finished, however. Joenes came suddenly awake in the small hours, alert and fearful, but with no idea of what had awakened him. The moon was down, and the darkness was at its most profound. Crickets, night birds, and small beasts of the forest had ceased all movement and all sound.

Joenes felt the skin along his spine prickle. He turned toward the door, certain that Laka's husband had come to kill him. Joenes had considered this possibility all night, since he had his doubts about Dr. Broign's prescription.

Then he realized that it was not

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an indignant husband who had shocked the night into silence. For now he heard a terrifying roar, of a fury and passion that could never have issued from a human throat. It stopped suddenly, and Joenes heard the movement of some huge creature in the brush outside.

"What is it?" Joenes asked.

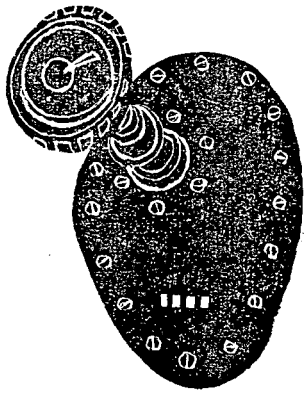
Laka had risen to her feet, and she clung to Joenes as though all the strength had gone from her limbs. She whispered, "It is the Beast!"

"But I thought that was a myth," Joenes said.

"There are no myths on Chorowait Mountain," Laka said. "We worship the Sun and Moon, which are real. And we fear the Beast, which is just as real as a chipmunk. Sometimes we can placate the Beast, and sometimes we can drive it away. But tonight it comes to kill."

Joenes did not doubt any longer, especially when he heard the crash of an enormous body against the wall of the cabin. Although the wall was made of seasoned logs fastened with thongs and pegs, the logs were shattered by the impact of the Beast's body. And looking up, Joenes found himself staring full into the face of the Beast. *(to be concluded next month)*

A somewhat expanded version of this novel will be published later this year by Signet under the title Journey Beyond Tomorrow.



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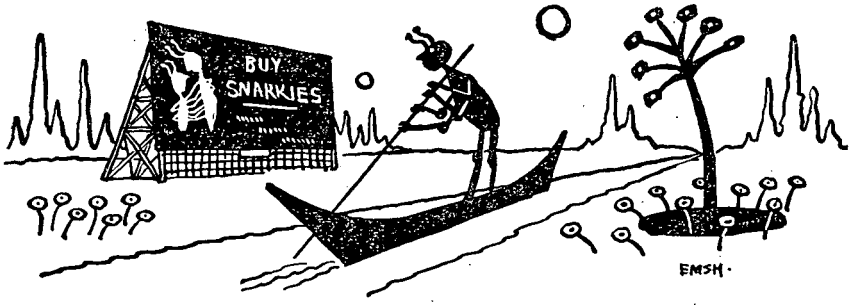

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